

# A WALK WITH JESUS

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W. H. NELSON



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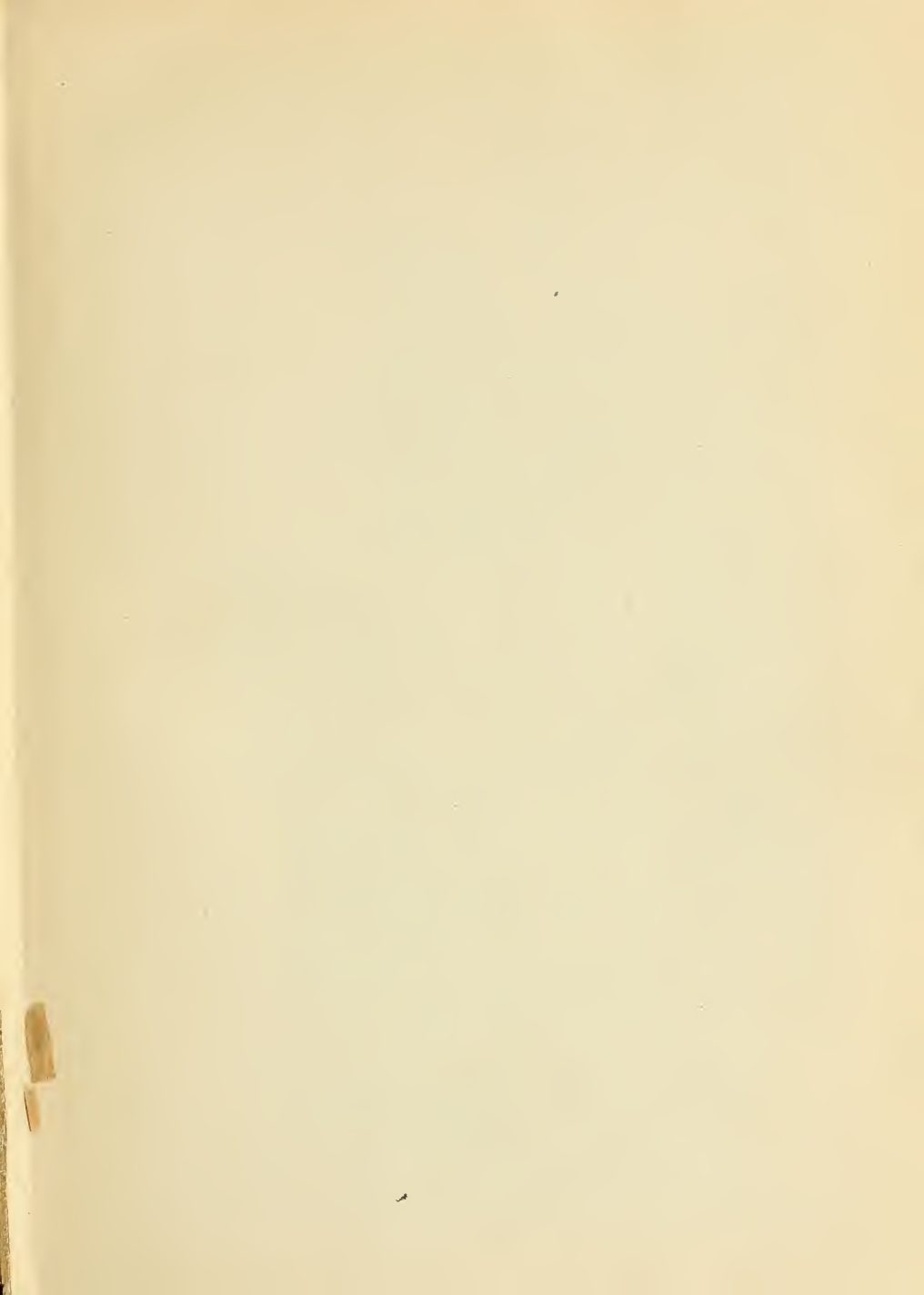
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# A WALK WITH JESUS

REV. W. H. NELSON, D. D.

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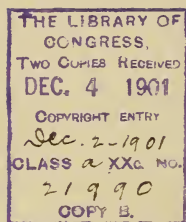
“Come ye, and let us walk in the light of  
the Lord.”—Isaiah ii, 5.

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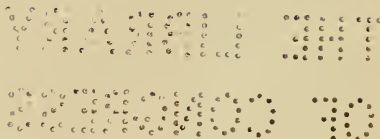
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## DEDICATION.

TO THE PRECIOUS MEMORY OF  
MY DECEASED FATHER AND MOTHER,  
WILLIAM AND SARAH NELSON, WHO TAUGHT ME  
OF JESUS, BY BOTH PRECEPT AND EXAMPLE, FROM MY  
EARLIEST CHILDHOOD; AND TO THE APPRECIATIVE MEMORY OF  
MY THEOLOGICAL TEACHER, MARCUS D. BUELL, OF  
BOSTON UNIVERSITY, WHO TAUGHT ME MOST  
HOW TO STUDY THE CHRIST AND HIS  
WORD, IS THIS VOLUME DEDI-  
CATED BY THE AUTHOR.



## PREFACE.

THE author, in bringing forth this work, has but one object, and that is to stimulate a more thorough study of the Gospel of Jesus Christ. The aim has been to write of Jesus in the plan of a simple story which has a beginning, an interesting course, and end.

The first two chapters are only preliminary and preparatory, while all others take up the words, works, and discourses of Jesus, consecutively, and point out the time, place, and circumstances in the connection.

The chapters, after the first two, deal with the last three years of the life of Jesus, or take him up at the baptism, and follow him to the end.

The work seeks to follow Jesus consecutively, to lose him at no time and place where it is possible, from any light of revelation, to follow him. And, where we can not follow, we point out, with all possible accuracy, the topography and chronology.

The writers are in every case blended and given a hearing on all subjects, so that we are never partial, but full and in harmony.

Thus the work can not fail to arouse interest in the Gospel narratives and prove helpful to riper minds, while it will be invaluable to Sunday-school teachers and Bible students, especially in lessons of the Gospels.

The work does not purport to be a harmony or commentary, yet it serves such ends to a practical extent.

The plan is to point out the moves of Jesus by sections under the chapter heads, when the sections are denoted by figures, as 1, 2, 3, etc.

But when Jesus performed more than one miracle in a given place, the sections are characterized by the letters of the alphabet; so one can readily, at a glance, see whether Jesus is consecutively working in a place or not.

W. H. N.

*Huntsville, Ala., November, 1901.*



## INTRODUCTION.

FOR thousands of years a weary waiting world had anticipated the coming of the Lord Jesus Christ. The promise of a Saviour had been given to the first sinning pair. Priests and prophets had from time to time foretold the advent of the Redeemer of humanity. At length, in the fullness of time, the Son of God, the Divine Man, the incarnate Deity, the Second Person of the Adorable Trinity, was born of a woman in the lowly stable of Bethlehem, the city of David.

His was of humble birth, and his early years were spent in the home of an artisan, and with his own hands he earned his daily bread. But when he came to be thirty years of age, the age at which he was legally capable of entering upon his life work, he was no longer the toiler of Nazareth, he became the Great Teacher and Prophet of the Jewish people. Never man, before or since, spake like Jesus; never man lived a life of such absolutely sinless purity; never man wrought such wondrous and miraculous works; never man died a more shameful and ignominious death; never man rose so gloriously triumphant over death and the grave; never man ascended to the throne of eternal power and dominion as did Jesus, the Son of Mary.

His command to every soul is, "Follow Me." If we obey the command, we will be no longer servants but friends, and we shall walk with him in close and loving fellowship. It is a blessed thing, a precious experience to walk with Jesus. When the two disciples walked with him, and he unfolded the Scriptures to them, their hearts burned within

them. When John Wesley came into communion with Jesus he felt his heart strangely warmed.

This volume, "A WALK WITH JESUS," takes the reader along the pathway pursued by the Redeemer from the manger-cradle to the tomb of Joseph, and from the tomb of Joseph to the throne of the eternal heavens. Our first glimpse of him is when we enter the dreary stable with the astonished shepherds, and find the Babe and his mother as the angels had declared. Our last view of him is as he rises from the earth, and is enwrapped with a flood of heavenly glory as he passes to the skies and we exclaim:

"Enter incarnate God!  
No feet but thine have trod  
The serpent down!  
Blow the full trumpets, blow,  
Wider yon portals throw,  
Savior, triumphant go,  
And take Thy crown!"

Would that thousands upon thousands might read this book, and thus become familiar with the words of Jesus, so that they may learn to love to walk with him day by day here on earth, and by and by, clad in white, walk with him the streets of gold in the paradise of God!

W. F. MALLALIEU.

*Boston, November, 1901.*

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# A WALK WITH JESUS.

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## CHAPTER I.

### JESUS, AND SOME THOUGHTS OF HIM BEFORE AND IN HIS DAY.

THE work we attempt in this offering, "A Walk with Jesus," must present some preliminary thoughts of the interesting Character before entering upon our journey with him.

These thoughts, being secular and sacred in character, will point out our inducement to walk with him through his brief ministry, to hear him speak and see him perform the most wonderful works of any man in the history of time.

And we are especially charmed when we consider the fact that all the life-work, words, and sufferings of Jesus were altruistic. Jesus was, in sympathy, labor, and love, so unlike man. He was such a remarkable character that the world, in all ages before and since his coming, has been forced to set him apart as supremely great. We shall pause, therefore, a while, to consider the world's estimate of and testimony to him.

### HIS COMING.

The fact of his coming was the burden of prophecy, and this prophecy was the preparation of his way. Such a character was not to come unexpected or unprepared for.

His coming was to affect man too essentially and indispensably to be overlooked.

Hence, that man might know of him and be prepared to meet him, all the prophets, from Moses down to Malachi, portrayed his coming, and mostly his character. They outlined his work and set up his redemptive scheme.

Marvelous fact! that away back in Gen. iii, 15, he is the Seed of the woman and the Bruiser of the head of the serpent of sin, since, through the natural serpent, sin entered into the world.

In Deut. xviii, 15, he is the Prophet whom Jehovah would raise up in the stead of Moses, and he would become the perfect Prophet and Lawgiver, as in him the law and the prophets were to be fulfilled.

In Psalm lxxxix, 20, he is the David of Israel, who was to come as the Eternal, and always sit upon the throne of his royalty till all his enemies become his footstool.

In Isaiah ix, 6, he is the Kingly Child, the given Son who was to shoulder the responsible government of heaven, and this he would do so well that he would get unto himself the name of Wonderful, Counselor, the Mighty God, the Everlasting Father, and the Prince of Peace.

In Zech. iii, 8, he is the Branch of Jehovah. This Branch was to afford the beauty of the Lord God and give fruit unto a ruined world, which had perished from God. It is Jesus to-day who is giving us the fruit of joy and the oil of gladness.

But the prophets did not only furnish us these facts of his coming and thus cheered the world's sad heart, but they even mentioned the time of his coming. For, going again to our first book, Gen. xlix, 10, and we have the very emphatic language of Moses, saying, "The scepter shall not depart from Judah, nor a lawgiver from between his feet, until Shiloh come; and unto him shall the gathering of the people be." This verse plainly shows us that

Jesus is the Shiloh who was to come ere the government of the Church should pass from the house of David, represented in the government held by the tribe of Judah, which revolted not against the son of Solomon.

In Dan. ix, 10, we read, "Seventy weeks are determined upon thy people and upon thy holy city, to finish the transgression, and to make an end of sins, and to make reconciliation for iniquity, and to bring in everlasting righteousness, and to seal up the vision and prophecy, and to anoint the Most Holy." But this language is so plain, beautiful, and emphatic that comment only spoils its evidence. We only call attention to it. It says seventy weeks, which are prophetic weeks, meaning, not seven literal weeks, but so many years will come, bringing the most Holy One. He is to finish the transgression, to make reconciliation for iniquity, to bring in everlasting righteousness, to seal up the vision and prophecy. Such language removes any possible misapplication.

Malachi (iii, 1), the last of the prophets, who prophesied only a few hundred years before Christ, and was permitted almost to see his day, writes as follows, "Behold, I will send my messenger, and he shall prepare the way before me: and the Lord [Jesus], whom ye seek, shall suddenly come to his temple, even the messenger of the covenant, whom ye delight in: behold, he shall come, saith the Lord [Jehovah] of hosts." But this messenger before the face of Jesus was John the Baptist, whose mission and work point out the time of the Savior's coming.

These several passages of the coming of Jesus, and the time, certainly prepared the minds and expectations of the people to receive him.

### HIS BIRTH.

The birth of Jesus, with all its connections, also point out his peculiarly great character.

First, the evangelist Luke tells us that the angel Gabriel was sent from God unto a city called Nazareth, and unto a virgin, whose name was Mary, to inform her that God had chosen to have her become the mother of the long-looked-for Messiah. And the angel's visit was on this wise: He addressed her, saying, "Hail, thou art highly favored, the Lord [Jehovah] is with thee: blessed art thou among women." This angelic visitant brought fear and distress to her mind; but the heavenly messenger said, "Fear not, for thou hast found favor with God. And, behold, thou shalt conceive in thy womb, and bring forth a Son, and shalt call his name Jesus. He shall be great, and shall be called the Son of the Highest: and the Lord [Jehovah] God shall give unto him the throne of his father David: and he shall reign over the house of Jacob forever: and of his kingdom there shall be no end." Then, with this assurance and revelation, Mary exclaimed, "Behold the handmaid of the Lord; be it unto me according to thy word."

This angel, as far as we are told, departed from Mary after this holy annunciation, and was no more heard of in the matter till the birth took place in Bethlehem. The birth occurred, the same writer tells us, as follows: While ordinary shepherds were guarding their sheep by night, "Lo, the angel of the Lord [Jehovah] came upon them and the glory of the Lord shone round about them: and they were sore afraid. And the angel said unto them, Fear not: for, behold, I bring you good tidings of great joy, which shall be to all people. For unto you is born this day in the city of David a Savior which is Christ the Lord."

After this messenger had finished announcing the birth, then there arose a grand chorus of the heavenly choir of myriads of angels, saying, "Glory to God in the highest, and on earth peace, good will toward men."

It is further stated that the shepherds decided that they would leave the plains and go unto Bethlehem to see if the things told them were true; and they went and found them even so; and the affair turned out a real fact, and no delusion. The Babe and Mary and Joseph were found in a humble station because there was no room in the inn.

#### CIRCUMCISION AND PRESENTATION.

The circumcision and presentation of Jesus were not uncommon occurrences; but the circumstances go with these to point out Jesus as the marvelous Child.

The thing most marvelous was the appearance of Simeon, who had long waited for the Christ whom Luke calls the Consolation of Israel. It had been told Simeon in some way, by the Holy Ghost, that he should not die before he should see the Messiah whom he had waited and steadily looked for as the hope of Israel. When the miraculous Child was brought into the temple to be presented, the Holy Spirit brought in Simeon, who took up the Child Jesus, and blessed God, and said, "Lord, now lettest thou thy servant depart in peace, according to thy word: for mine eyes have seen thy salvation, which thou hast prepared before the face of all people: a light to lighten the Gentiles, and the glory of thy people Israel."

Some time after the above occurrences had transpired, the remarkable news of this miraculous Child spread, doubtless, far and wide. By some means the news reached Persia, and thence came wise men, led on by a star, asking: "Where is he that is born King of the Jews? We are come to worship him." Quite naturally, they went to Jerusalem, the chief city of the Jews, since seeking their King. But, strange to them, he was not there found; but they found Herod, the cruel tyrant, who at once became troubled to hear that another King than himself was born to rule the Jews, and that men of great learning and governmental

rank had learned these things before him, and had arrived from a great distance with presents and to worship him. But not only was Herod troubled, but all the authorities of Jerusalem. So Herod called hastily the chief priests and scribes, and demanded that they should tell him, as well as the magi, where the King should be born. They had the prophets, the law, and Psalms, and only needed to open these to find out concerning the nativity of this Child. And they found it was to be in Bethlehem of Judah; for the law was not to depart from Judah, nor a lawgiver from between his feet, till Shiloh came. These priests thus informed the wicked Herod, who put on the face of a murderous hypocrite; for he said to the magi, "In Bethlehem of Judah the King is born." Then, before sending them thither in his territory, he inquired of them more particularly concerning the time of the star's appearance. Then he sent them to Bethlehem, saying, "Go and find the Child, and worship it, and bring me word of him, so I may come and worship him also." The wise men, being authorized and instructed, took their leave for Bethlehem. The same star went before them again, and guided to where the Child was, and stood over it in the manger. These wise men worshiped the new King, and, after presenting gifts, were warned of God to depart and return to their country another way than back through Jerusalem, as Herod requested.

But when Herod saw that he was mocked by the wise men, he became angry, and, to carry out his hypocritical purposes, sent soldiers to Bethlehem and had all male children slain from two years old and under, that he might destroy the young King. But God had saved his Son this atrocious fate by the angelic warning and flight into Egypt, where the holy family seem to have lived till Herod's early death.



## CHAPTER II.

### JESUS, AND HIGH TESTIMONY TO HIS EARLY AND LATER LIFE.

WE shall consider what man has said concerning Jesus, and how he was able to influence, not only their faith in him, because of his greatness, but their unfaltering devotion and loyalty.

We observe the testimony is sacred and secular, running from childhood; for Luke ii, 39, 40, says Jesus grew and waxed strong in spirit, being filled with wisdom, and the grace of God was upon him.

This language gives us insight into the childhood of Jesus, and points out his childhood character as being holy. It says that his young life was godly, and became more so as his years multiplied.

But by this language is not meant that he became freer from sin and stronger in godliness, but that he became more capable of imbibing the Spirit of his Father, and increased daily in power of true righteousness.

He was a child Divinely educated; for before he became a man, even in this early childhood he was filled with Divine wisdom. And we know that there was no way for him to have such knowledge as he possessed aside from the inspiration and holy endowment of God the Father.

But we again peep at this childhood life at twelve, and get further remarkable testimony.

At this age he went with Mary and Joseph up to Jerusalem to the feast of the Passover held annually among the

Jews since the angel of God passed over Egypt slaying the firstborn for Israel's deliverance. And, while there, he went into the temple, and took first, we suppose, a stand, and afterward a seat among the doctors, both to hear and ask them questions. And Luke says all that heard him were astonished at his understanding and answers. Even his mother and Joseph were amazed at the action so early taken by this Child, who was ever a wonder to them.

But after this remarkable occurrence in the temple, we hear no more of this strange Child at all. He lived in Nazareth, and remained subject to his parents of earth. But in these sixteen or seventeen years of silence he was, doubtless, often a subject of comment and query in that humble Nazarene home. Doubtless he was always a favorite Child for his obedience and loveliness. He was never angry nor in the mischief of bad boys. Oftentimes his neighbors and acquaintances saw in him the unnatural look, the heavenly smile, and he became more and more each day some unusual attraction worthy of consideration. Year after year he walked the familiar streets of Nazareth, and toiled, during week-days, with Joseph at their carpentry, to support the household of all his younger brothers and sisters. But on each Sabbath he was first and foremost getting ready and going to the synagogue, where, in after years, he would stand and preach, and be driven away. But in the services of the synagogue, how anxious he must have been, in those years, for his time to come! How profound must have been his attention and scrutinizing his thoughts when the ruler of the synagogue or priest would be explaining the Messianic prophecies!

But, in Nazareth, we only think of Jesus, and we do not know of him. The curtain dropped at Jerusalem, at the feast and in the temple, and all behind the curtain is to us conjecture and imagination. But, at thirty, when the time had fully come for him to be about his Father's



business, the curtain was raised again, right in Nazareth. And three evangelists raised it for us; viz., Matthew, Mark, and Luke; but we will let Matthew speak: "And it came to pass in those days, that Jesus came from Nazareth of Galilee, and was baptized of John in Jordan. And straightway coming up out of the water, he saw the heavens opened, and the Spirit like a dove descending upon him: and there came a voice from heaven, saying, Thou art my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased." Here the curtain rises high, and God, than whom is none greater, speaks of this Son as beloved and well pleasing to him.

The next testimony which we present is that of John the Baptist. This man bore witness to Jesus, and his testimony is very important for three reasons: First, Jesus was pointed out to him as the Messiah by the Divine finger of God. Second, Because men looked on John as the Christ, and this could have easily made John a rival enemy to Jesus. Third, John testified at opportune times, and when the testimony lessened his own popularity and influence.

We note what he said of Jesus. He testified, saying, "I indeed baptize you with water unto repentance: but he that cometh after me is mightier than I, whose shoes I am not worthy to bear: he shall baptize you with the Holy Ghost, and with fire: whose fan is in his hand, and he will thoroughly purge his floor and gather his wheat into the garner; but he will burn up the chaff with unquenchable fire." This first testimony borne to Jesus was while John was at Bethabara.

The evangelist records the second testimony of the Baptist at this same place, saying to the priests and Levites: "I am not the Christ. I am the voice of one crying in the wilderness." And on the next day, when John noticed Jesus passing, he testified, saying, "Behold the Lamb of God, which taketh away the sin of the world." But the last testimony of the Baptist was under more trying cir-

cumstances, and while he was at Enon. This testimony grew out of a jealousy on the part of some of John's disciples, who went to him, saying, "Rabbi, he that was with thee beyond Jordan, to whom thou bearest witness, behold the same baptizeth, and all men come to him." John answered, and said: "A man can receive nothing, except it be given him from heaven. Ye, yourselves, bear me witness, that I said, I am not the Christ; but that I am sent before him. He must increase, but I must decrease. He that cometh from above is above all: the Father loveth the Son, and has given all things into his hand. He that believeth on the Son hath everlasting life: and he that believeth not the Son shall not see life; but the wrath of God abideth on him." Thus ends the three important testimonies of the Baptist, and they are, as said, the most important testimonies to the character of Jesus. They show that John held Jesus as the expected Messiah and as him who would save men by taking away their sins. John held Jesus far above himself in character and official authority. He felt and acknowledged to his own pupils that he was not worthy to so much as loose the sandals of the feet of Jesus. The baptism of himself, with water, was not to be compared with that of Jesus, which would be with the Holy Ghost and with fire.

Another important witness to interest us in Jesus is Nicodemus. This man was a Jewish counselor and ruler, a member of the Sanhedrin Court, which was the highest court of the Jewish civil and religious government. Nicodemus came first to see Jesus by night, and, in the language used, showed that he, with others of his rank, were prepared in their minds to render homage to him as the sent One of God. He said, "We know thou art a Teacher come from God: for no man can do these miracles that thou doest, except God be with him." Again, when the question of arresting Jesus came up in the council, and an attempt

was made to convict him, Nicodemus rose up in the very face of the enemies of Jesus in the council, and asked, "Doth our law judge any man before it hear him, and know what he doeth?" But this question to the members of the council asked more in meaning than in words. It certainly, among many other things, shows that Nicodemus was a friendly believer on the Lord Jesus. And this faith was the fruit of his knowledge of the character of Jesus.

We next take the testimony of Flavius Josephus, who is the noted Jewish historian. In speaking of Jewish characters, he says of Jesus: "Now, there was about this time, Jesus, a wise Man, if it be lawful to call him a Man, for he was a Doer of wonderful works—a Teacher of such men as receive the truth with pleasure. He drew over to him both many of the Jews and many of the Gentiles. He was [the] Christ; and when Pilate, at the suggestion of the principal men, had condemned him to the cross, those that loved him at first did not forsake him, for he appeared to them alive again the third day, as the divine prophets had foretold these and ten thousand other wonderful things concerning him." This testimony to Jesus by Josephus speaks for itself regarding his character, and is the more important to us as it comes from a Jew and after the crucifixion, death, and resurrection.

Again, there were his apostles and disciples, who lived with and followed Jesus, and for this reason their testimony is the more valued. Their greatest testimony, however, is seen in their loyalty to Jesus. They were willing to suffer deprivations, scorn, imprisonments, and even death for him; and these things because of what they saw and believed to be in him.

But one day Jesus himself wished to draw out their verbal testimony for the world and following ages. So, in the early part of his third ministerial year, while about Cæsarea-Philippi, he asked them: "Whom do men say that

I the Son of man am? And they said, Some say that thou art John the Baptist, Elias; and others Jeremiah, or one of the prophets. He saith unto them, But whom say ye that I am? And Simon Peter answered and said, Thou art the Christ, the Son of the living God." Then Jesus blessed and commended this faith of Simon as coming from God out of heaven, and declared he would, upon said faith in himself, build his Church. And what was Peter's expressed faith was the faith of all the apostles.

Then, following the testimony of the twelve, we have that of the heroic Paul, or Saul, of Tarsus. And Paul's faithful testimony is very valuable for three specific reasons; namely, first, he was a miraculously-converted Pharisee, and he really, in his conviction, saw Jesus; secondly, because he was a well-educated witness, who knew what he was talking about; thirdly, because he was willing to count all things loss or but dross when compared with the excellent knowledge of Jesus. And he did seal his testimony with his blood in martyrdom. In Paul's writings we find this significant testimony concerning Jesus, that he is "the blessed and only Potentate, the King of kings and Lord of lords." Jesus came, who is over all, God-blessed forever, the great God and our Savior. Now, as to Paul's estimate of Jesus, he says, "God forbid that I should glory save in the cross of Christ, in whom we have redemption through his blood, the forgiveness of sins, according to the riches of his grace."

Now, when the apostles and early disciples passed away, their mantle of testimony fell upon their immediate successors, who are known as Church fathers. These all entered the cause of Jesus, and counted not their lives dear unto them, that they might further the Church throughout their generations and hand it down to posterity. And, to do this, they suffered whatever arrayed itself against their cause, which was the cause of righteousness.

With these come the great philosophic schools, with their professors and pupils, and they, in philosophical research for the most part, take off their hats and adore and crown Jesus Lord of all. He is to every one a unique character, whose life and teaching, by words and actions, place him high over all.

Yes, that Jesus is the greatest and most influencing character the world has ever known, goes without question, and can not be contradicted. Men in all races, regardless of religion, will frankly confess that Jesus of Nazareth is the most wonderful character; that he stands peerless for wholesome examples and righteous influences in all the many walks of life; that no character has ever equaled him, among the learned in wisdom, among the charitable in kindness, among the sympathetic in joys or sorrows.

We truly speak when we say in the history of the human race "there is none like Jesus."

But we pause to consider why he is such a wonderful character, and why so influential. We note, first, that he is naturally great, since he is Divine. John tells us that he is the incarnate Word, and the Word is God. He was in the beginning, and all things were made by him, and he made all things good, because he was good and holy. Since, therefore, Jesus is the Christ, and, hence, the Son of God, he is far above all creatures celestial or terrestrial. He is superior in existence, in character, in wisdom, and in power. He is above all by force of creation, and over all by exaltation. His station is at the right hand of God, far beyond all principalities and powers. He is in possession of the eternal throne, having all powers in heaven and earth and under the earth given him. His years are eternal, and, in his real, Divine character, death has always been and always will be strange to him. His dominion is universal, and he has the promise of the Father that to him "every knee shall bow and every tongue con-



fess." This promise, promulgated, says there may arise opposition in acts, in infidelities, in false doctrines, and in every possible skeptical way; yet Christ's kingdom shall eventually come, and his will shall be done in earth as it is in the heavens. This promise to-day is actuated by the faith of Christendom; it has been influencing the races and nations of the earth for eighteen hundred years. And this promise is as thoroughly believed in and preached as it was in the early days of Christian influence, when men went into prisons and into all kinds of death for its sake.

Christendom believes that the Christian side is the side which will inevitably win, and this faith is founded upon Jesus, his life, doctrine, and works. No man ever lived as he did, nor thus taught and worked. This peculiar life and character from the first had its bearing and attractions. From the first Jesus won admirers and received believers and made disciples. There never was a time when there was none to follow and adore; never a time when there were not the many thousands of knees ready to bow to his royalty and magnify him with praise.

But he is great because he is the world's Redeemer and only Savior. Salvation is through Jesus, and none other. "There is none other name under heaven given whereby we must be saved." Then it is to Jesus all men do and must look for salvation. He is God's Son and only Representative of the heavenly government to whom men may come and on whom God depends for man's salvation. He is the "Life, the Truth, and the Way." He is the Life, since, aside from him, all is spiritual and material death. He is the Truth, since he alone comes to us from the Father, bringing the fully revealed will of him to men. He is the Way, since he leads and only can lead, men to God. Through him we go in and out, and find pastures of living verdure and waters.

But Jesus is not only a nominal Savior. He is a full, perfect, and sufficient sacrifice and oblation. In him God is well pleased. To him God gave command, on the Mountain of Transfiguration, to listen, yes, listen to him, for he speaks of God and heaven, and, aside from him, none, no, not angels, can speak. Listen to him, for he alone has the words of eternal life.

“Hear him, ye deaf; his praise, ye dumb,  
Your loosened tongues employ;  
Ye blind, behold your Savior come;  
And leap, ye lame, for joy.”

## CHAPTER III.

### ACTS AND WORDS OF JESUS FROM HIS BAPTISM TO THE FIRST PASSOVER FEAST.

#### SECTION 1.—THE TEMPTATION.

Matt. iv. 1-11; Mark i. 12, 13; Luke iv. 1-13.

**A**FTER the baptism of Jesus in the Jordan by John, which act was performed, most probably, in the month of January, A. D. 27, Jesus entered into the most trying experience of his whole life. It was the notable fast and temptation.

This experience of Jesus has a twofold design: First, it was preparatory. Jesus came into the world for the great work of redemption, and, as man, he needed strength to begin and go through with such a task. He also needed familiarity, through experience, with the weaknesses of man under physical, lustful, and ambitious trial. This he received in the temptation. Second, it was exemplary. Jesus here lays down a means of grace, fasting, which is recommended in his Word, and, according to his own utterance, the most powerful agency of the Christian religion. When he wrought what the disciples could not, he stated to them, upon being asked why they could not perform the miracle, "This kind goeth not out but by prayer and fasting." Hence, we gather, from the nature of the temptation, a need of spiritual strength to work for the Lord Jesus, and this we can always get through prayer and fasting. But we find more light upon its beneficence by reference to



the Antechristian characters. Take Moses and Elijah, who both fasted the same length of time Jesus did, that they might gather strength to perform the grave duties resting upon them, and became fully sanctified for all required of their lives.

But now we turn to look at the practical part of the temptation. It was in the desert of Judea, doubtless in the month of January or February, for Mark says immediately after his baptism he was driven or forcefully led into the wilderness to be tempted of Satan.

"In the wilderness" is a very indefinite phrase. We have no clue to the precise spot where any of the temptations occurred. We need, however, to content ourselves with knowing it was in the wilderness of the Jordan, where John was baptizing; for Jesus soon returned to the baptismal grounds, where John testified of him, and there gathered his first disciples.

We note that after the baptism, when Jesus had fasted forty days and nights, the tempter came to him. The tempter came when he had fasted forty days and nights, and had become hungry. Notice, the tempter came to him when he was physically weak, and in the trial of his weakness offered the temptation, as Jesus was more liable in this state to yield. Satan said, "If thou be the Son of God, command that these stones be made bread." The trial here is twofold: First, "If thou be the Son of God," is a proposition to prove that thou art. Second, Prove that thou art by making, as Luke has it, "this stone bread," and satisfy your distressing hunger. Here we infer that Satan tries men when they are least prepared to meet him, and in their weakest spot. But Jesus, the Christ, was ready for him, and replied thus, "It is written, Man shall not live by bread alone, but by every word that proceedeth out of the mouth of God." Thus ends the first trial, with a great lesson to us; namely, God has said what we shall

and shall not do. "It is written;" therefore, like Jesus, we must be faithfully obedient to our Heavenly Father, and faith and obedience will always give us victory over the tempter.

In the second temptation we are told that the devil took Jesus up into the holy city, and set him on a pinnacle of the temple, and said unto him, "If thou be the Son of God, cast thyself down; for it is written, He shall give his angels charge concerning thee: and in their hands they shall bear thee up, lest at any time thou dash thy foot against a stone." Thus we have the second trial of our Savior by Satan. It was a further request that Jesus should show himself the Son of God by casting himself down from a lofty place of the temple. But this Jesus declined to do, inasmuch as he was not in the world to prove his Sonship to the devil by an act so harsh and uncalled for by the Father. But this trial had its weight with the Savior for two reasons: First, it appealed to a demonstration of his Divine Sonship. It was certainly a craving of Jesus to demonstrate his power of salvation; but not to Satan. And secondly, Satan's reference to angelic aid proved a force of influence to dismount the pinnacle. Aside from these views, we see not wherein comes the temptation; neither can we conceive of a thing as being a temptation if it does not stimulate, in some way, a desire or mind to do. Yet Jesus met him as the second, but triumphant, Adam. He said, "It is written, again, Thou shalt not tempt the Lord thy God." Perhaps there is no better lesson to be drawn from this whole affair than what Jesus taught in the reply to this second temptation. From it we learn that we should not expose ourselves to unnecessary evils or dangers, presuming that God will save and deliver us. God can deliver in all dangers, but will not deliver us when we knowingly and uselessly enter them. The third temptation is given the second place by Luke, and the third by Matthew.

This may arise from the fact that Luke considers it more important. We really do not now know the chronological order of these occurrences, and it is not essential we should; but Matthew's order is the one mostly believed to be the real order. It also occurred on the wilderness mountain. The language is, "The devil taketh him up into an exceeding high mountain, and sheweth all the kingdoms of the world, and the glory of them; and saith unto him, All these things will I give thee, if thou wilt fall down and worship me." Thus ends the trial. It is a charming and strange one. Satan lifts up Jesus, either physically or mentally, to where he could see all earthly kingdoms and their glory, and these he offers to Jesus if he would only perform the physically easy service of falling upon his knees, or prostrate, and worship him. What a promised possession for so small an act! Yet Jesus this promised possession and glory declined to accept from Satan, since homage for them would be sin, and the possession only a worldly allurements of perishable vice.

The tempter and the temptation carry such an important lesson. First, we note, the tempter could give nothing to Jesus but the vanity of these kingdoms; for already they belonged to Jesus, and the earth with all its fullness. But the tempter will promise vainly and deceive falsely; therefore, no one can trust him. We should never accept any promise of good from him, for there is no goodness in him to give. And the best thing to do in trial is to follow the example of Jesus. This is the third temptation, and it meets with a stronger refutation and resistance than the first two. This shows that, if we put our trust in God when tried, we shall become more able to resist temptations as they grow numerous, and we shall weaken the tempter. Let us listen to Jesus, "Get thee hence, Satan: for it is written, Thou shalt worship the Lord thy God, and him only shalt thou serve." Such strong and willful

determination here brings down the tempter and repulses him. Matthew says the devil yielded, and, in despair, left Jesus, who, under the fatiguing trial of hunger and an inducement to render homage to Satan, was strengthened and consoled by angels. These heavenly messengers, doubtless, ministered to both his physical and Divine natures, by giving bread to the body, as in the case of Elijah's fast, and comfort to his mind. Who can tell what message they brought down from the Father respecting this only eternal Son who had assumed the rein of the government of the world's redemption?

## SECTION 2.—THE FIRST DISCIPLES WON.

John i, 35-51.

For a number of forty or fifty days Jesus was in seclusion. He was alone in the wilderness, and, not since he allowed us to walk with him from Nazareth to the Jordan, where he was baptized, has he accepted any earthly association. He left the baptismal grounds and went into the secluded wilderness of Judea, being led by the Spirit, for the trial of his representative powers and integrity for saving the world. He took no man with him to witness the trial of these forty or fifty days. If he had taken us along, or allowed us to go, perhaps we could tell more of the temptation; but, as it is, all we know is what Jesus tells himself, and he tells us all that is necessary for us to know, though not all we wish to or might know.

Suddenly Jesus reappeared, to find that quite an excitement had arisen concerning him as the Messiah. The baptism and the descent of the dove upon him, and the testifying voice, had fully convinced John, and started him to preaching about Jesus as being the kingdom of heaven, which was at hand. Also, John's testimony and preaching were attracting great multitudes from Jerusalem and all the regions about the Jordan. The priests and Levites of

Jerusalem sent, asking John, "Art thou the Christ? Who art thou?" and John gave them plain information to the effect that he was but the herald of the Christ who had appeared among them for baptism some days prior.

But now, since Jesus had entered upon his great work—namely, the establishing of a spiritual kingdom—he needed to take some preliminary steps to that end. The first step was to get some disciples whom he might take around with him and teach and prepare to become his apostles.

By the heavenly manifestations and the testimony of John, Jesus was so magnified that even John's disciples were ready to leave him and follow Jesus, the acknowledged Lamb of God. So Jesus very easily won his first five disciples early after his seclusion and temptation.

He won them on this wise: "John stood and two of his disciples; and, looking upon Jesus as he walked, John the Baptist said, Behold the Lamb of God! and the two disciples heard him speak, and they followed Jesus."

We know, now, by reading John i, 40, that one of the two here mentioned was Andrew, the brother of Simon. We do not know the other of the two; but as John alone reports this incident, and his custom was always to conceal his own name when mentioning any praiseworthy act, we infer that the other was John himself, the writer of the Gospel. As soon as Jesus accepted Andrew and that other disciple, Andrew went and hunted for his brother, Peter, saying, "We have found the Messiah." This shows that Christ had been hid for some time, and was expected to reappear, which he did. Then Peter came, and "When Jesus beheld him, he said, Thou art Simon, the son of Jona: thou shalt be called Cephas."

Thus we see Jesus get his first three disciples; namely, Andrew, John the Gospel writer, and Simon Peter.

On the following day, Jesus went forth and found Philip, and said unto him, "Follow me;" and Philip obeyed readily,



since he saw following Jesus his two neighbors, Andrew and Peter; for they both were of Bethsaida. Then Philip hunted his brother, Nathanael, and said to him, "We have found him, of whom Moses in the law, and the prophets, did write, Jesus of Nazareth, the son of Joseph." When Philip mentioned Nazareth, he set Nathanael to questioning. He asked, "Can there any good thing come out of Nazareth?" Philip replied, "Come and see." Nathanael came. And when Jesus saw him coming, he said, "Behold, an Israelite, indeed, in whom is no guile!" Nathanael wished to know how Jesus knew him. Jesus told him, "Before that Philip called thee, when thou wast under the fig-tree, I saw thee." Nathanael said, "Rabbi, thou art the Son of God; thou art the King of Israel." Nathanael marveled at the knowledge and foresight Jesus had of him; but Jesus assured him that he should see greater things than those. Then he specified some things. He said to Nathanael, "Hereafter, ye shall see heaven open, and the angels of God ascending and descending upon the Son of man." Whether this prophecy has ever been fulfilled, no one knows; but if not, it will be.

The selecting and gathering these first five disciples was a very important step of Jesus in setting up his spiritual kingdom. For every government and kingdom must have a head and foundation. Of the kingdom of Jesus, he is head; but while he is the headstone of the corner, there must be the twelve foundations found in the apostles. Jesus, at best, could live but a brief life; and yet, his work needed to go on; but it had to go on by those chosen representatives—men whom he would ordain and qualify to teach all nations his laws and will. Thus we saw him from time to time selecting his cabinet. Here we have the first five; leaving seven yet to come. But the marvel about these men being selected and accepted was their humility. How unlike man Jesus did! He did not look for the opulent,

popular, and most learned; but accepted those comparatively uneducated and poor men, because he saw that they would grace their position, and that he could make them what he wanted by miraculous intervention. However humble the men, and the beginning of this kingdom, both were to become great in the world's drama, and attract the most fascinating, learned, and wise of philosophers. This little beginning was to grow into a great mountain, and fill the earth as the waters the great seas.

Jesus then left Bethabara, and went with his new disciples into Galilee; for he was invited, by some friendly acquaintance, into Galilee to Cana, and to a marriage and wedding, to which he went. They hastily went up; for it occurred in three more days, and they had some considerable distance to go.

### SECTION 3.—THE TURNING OF WATER INTO WINE.

John ii, 1-12.

We are indebted to the writer of the Fourth Gospel alone for this section, whose subject is, "The turning of water into wine." This act was performed by Jesus during the feast, and is rightly called a miracle. It truly was a miracle; for the natural water was turned to real wine. There was no deception or trick performed; for the act was performed in the midst of the feast, and just when wine was most needed. It was performed by the Saviour without leaving his seat. He sat still, and only ordered; and his mother carefully warned the servants to do as they were told by him; and this they did. Hence, Jesus had no chance to tamper with any elements, if he had chosen to do so. The miracle of converting the water into wine was actual, and so really successful, that when the governor of the feast had tasted the new wine, he condemned the bridegroom for reserving it to the last.



This is not only a miracle, but, in their order, we learn by St. John, it was the first of the miracles wrought by Jesus. This fact makes it interesting and easy. The incident happened in Cana of Galilee, and in the month of February or March, A. D. 27. Let us notice the facts under which it occurred. John, our informant, says, "When they wanted wine [that is, when what they had gave out], the mother of Jesus said unto him, They have no wine. Jesus said unto her, Woman, what have I to do with thee? Mine hour is not yet come." She made no further remarks to him, "but said to the servants, Whatsoever he saith unto you, do it. Now, there were six waterpots of stone, after the manner of the purifying of the Jews, containing two or three firkins apiece. Jesus said unto them, Fill the waterpots with water. And they filled them up to the brim. And he said unto them, Draw out now, and bear to the governor of the feast. And they bare it. When the ruler of the feast had tasted the water that was made wine, and knew not whence it was, the governor of the feast called the bridegroom, and said unto him, Every man at the beginning doth set forth good wine; and when men have well drunk, then that which is worse; but thou hast kept the good wine until now."

Thus runs the narrative, showing the first supernatural work of Him who was both natural and supernatural in power; and that, in a time of need, He will use both powers for mankind.

But this miracle opens two views into the character of Jesus. First, we have the social side of this Divine Son. His being invited, and attending this social gathering, shows that he was sociable in character and practice, and that such affairs are not necessarily evil and to be avoided. Jesus, no doubt, had many acquaintances there, besides brothers and sisters by Mary. He doubtless entered heartily into the occasion of the evening, and enjoyed himself, espe-

cially with his newly-made disciples. Second, we have the sympathetic side. Here is a young bridegroom with his newly-married wife and many invited friends, among whom is the Son of God and his mother. And right in the midst of the feast and evening, the wine, which was the most essential thing for such occasions, gave out, to the shame and embarrassment of the bridegroom. What shadows of chagrin came over him when some one whispered around, to his knowledge, that the wine was exhausted and the guests were not served. How his feelings writhed with shame and embarrassment. How his color went and came. See him, so perplexed and bewildered. But among his invited guests there sat One who could relieve this young man in his embarrassment and poverty; for it was, doubtless, poverty that caused an insufficiency of wine. This one was Jesus of Nazareth, the son of Joseph and Mary. He was not only able, but would relieve him; for he felt for him. He fully sympathized with him, and he was inclined to put his sympathy into actual practice. And Jesus was, at that opportune time, the only one that could help this young man. His friends were doubtless of the poorer class; but even if any of them were rich, they could not well do for the bridegroom what he needed then. He needed wine, and that then and there. There was no time to send away at a distance for it; no time to make it; hence there was no way to relieve this young man but by miraculous power, which no one had but Jesus. And Jesus put forth his power, because he saw the utter helplessness of the case; and, being so tenderly sympathetic, he could not let this moment pass to do for a friend what he could not do for himself.

But we must note what part the mother of Jesus took in the affair, and how Jesus treated her action. Woman-like, she seemed to have given attention to the exhaustion of the wine before Jesus did. And she went immediately

to him, and said, "They have no wine." Notice how she made her statement. She did not say, "Son, the wine of the people is exhausted; what do you think of it?" but addressed him in such a way as most certainly to get his help, which she believed he could give. She went at once to the quick of the matter. She used no maternal persuasion; for this was not the time, and it was not necessary. She further realized that he had been her son in Nazareth, and under her roof, when she could say "go," and he went; and "come," and he came. But when he left that home for the Jordan, she lost her maternity to a great extent, and he became to her Jesus, Savior, as well as to any and all mankind. We think this view is all needed to be looked at, in the reply of Jesus to Mary, when he addressed her as "woman," and not "mother." Much speculation has been kept up over this manner of Christian address. Some say it was customary thus to address her; others say it was harsh. But we think it was simply because his time henceforth was to be occupied solely for his Father in the work of redemption, and he would no longer serve in the home of Nazareth; and would hold only that relation to Mary, as to others, to be saved. Hence, Mary would be his real mother in the flesh, but not in command; therefore, she was to him woman, and he to her Savior. But Jesus, in substance, tells us this; for while once in a Galilean town his mother and brothers wished to get him out of the multitude for a private remark; and it was told Jesus that his mother and brothers were without, desiring to speak with him; and he lifted up his hand over those around, and said, "Behold my mother and brethren; for they that try to do the will of my Father, the same are my mother and sisters and brethren." Thus, we see any one is the mother of Jesus if a servant of God, and no one particularly.

Jesus brought out the same remark while upon the cross. He said, simply, "Woman, behold thy son." And

to John he said, "Behold thy mother;" and we are told that John took Mary home. Moreover, by this address, Jesus saw an opportunity to lead Mary to a sense of her dependence upon him for salvation. He would teach her her sinfulness and helplessness; and that she must not fail to seek grace because she had given him birth, or because she looked upon him as her son. He emphasizes this thought as the newly-attested Messiah, by replying thus: "Woman, what have I to do with thee? My hour is not yet come." At once Mary saw that she could no longer exercise any maternal authority, and she fell back in her chair of repose, and simply said what she further had to say to the servants. Of course, this was the first time Jesus ever addressed her thus, or treated her not as an earthly mother. In the Temple, at twelve, when she asked him of his conduct, he only replied, "Wist ye not that I must be about my Father's business?" We note, in reading Luke ii, 48, 49, that Mary called him "Son" in addressing him. He did not call her "mother;" but by leaving the temple and following her, he yielded to her maternal authority. But not so in this Galilean home of Cana.

Also, very much speculation has arisen over the act of Jesus making wine which is said would intoxicate. We will notice, briefly, this objection, and pass on with Jesus from Cana.

In the first place, we should observe that there is no certainty about the quantity which Jesus made. From reading the narrative, it seems that a greater quantity was made than what we can reasonably suppose. We can not reasonably suppose that Jesus made more than what was really needed to carry out the emergent demand; for this would be inconsistent with all his acts in later life; for he did no unnecessary work. We can not reasonably suppose that he would make an element which would abundantly stand to ferment, and intoxicate men, it being contrary to

the laws of the Old Testament Scriptures, which he used as his religious guide, and which he came to perfect. In reading the narrative, it says, "There sat six waterpots of stone, containing two or three firkins apiece." Now, what this measure really was, is the unknown quantity. That the firkin varied in size, there is no question. The firkin we know of, in the English tongue, held the fourth part of a barrel, or nine gallons, or seven and one-half imperial gallons. Now, let us suppose this is the quantity Jesus made; and we have, computing the water-pot to hold three firkins (one hundred and sixty-two gallons) of wine; or holding two firkins apiece (one hundred and eight gallons). But if some held three and some two, there was much over one hundred gallons. But can any one reasonably believe that Jesus made such a quantity of an intoxicating drink? It certainly was enough for a royal marriage or banquet; but this humble marriage feast was neither.

Some suppose that the Syrian metretes is the real measure in the case. This metretes is said to have held seven and one-eighth of a pint, which, if right, the six pots named would have contained about fourteen gallons. But there are others who say the metretes contained ten gallons, which make the quantity again enormously large and irrational. Since there is such uncertain knowledge of measurements, we can arrive at no definite conclusion as to quantity.

But again, noticing the narrative more carefully, we observe that it does not say Jesus ordered all the pots to be filled. It only says, "There were set there six waterpots of stone," . . . and "Jesus saith unto them, Fill the waterpots with water." Now, Jesus may have pointed to two, three, or four, nearest him, meaning fill only those, leaving the rest; for John does not say he, or they, used them all; but simply says they sat there to be used, we infer, when necessary.

Now, as to the quality. The objector says, "Jesus made

wine, and, doubtless, drank a portion of what he made for others, and for that occasion in which he himself was engaged." Then he alleges that wine is not an evil, and that it is fanaticism to denounce it; that there is no moral turpitude in its use. They also quote, in this connection, the Apostle Paul, who said to Timothy, "Drink no longer water, but use a little wine, for thy stomach's sake and thine often infirmities."

But, in speaking of this act of Jesus, and this prescription of Paul, one must not forget the other acts and words of Jesus and Paul concerning wine and strong drink. If these here were their only utterances, we would be somewhat at sea. But when we take the Old and New Testaments, and know that they are Christly-founded, and that they abound in percepts against intoxicants and drunkenness, we must conclude that the wine Jesus made, and that which Paul recommended, would not especially intoxicate. But when we read of the miracle, we see no time for fermentation; for, as soon as the pots were filled, Jesus said, "Draw out, and bear to the governor." The governor called it the "good wine," that had been kept over. The very fact that it was supernaturally made, and had not time to rot and decompose by fermentation, made it the "good wine." Hence, we conclude that it was wine, and served highly the object for which it was made; but, since made by the mighty power of Jesus, who did all things well, it was not an element that would intoxicate.



## CHAPTER IV.

### JESUS ATTENDS THE FIRST PASSOVER FEAST AT JERUSALEM, AND HIS SUBSEQUENT ACTS AND WORDS DURING THE FIRST YEAR OF HIS MINISTRY.

John ii, 13.

WE now enter properly upon the ministerial journeys with Jesus. Heretofore, we have only seen him act and ordinarily speak. We are, henceforth, to hear him speak as never man spake; we are to hear him preach, and see him act. We last sat with him at Cana. We must now take a flying trip with him over to Capernaum; for John says, "He began his miracles at Cana, and manifested forth his glory; and his disciples believed on him." And after this, he went down to Capernaum, he and his mother and his brethren and his disciples; and they continued there not many days.

Thus, we see that the holy family were, doubtless, at the marriage; and this being ended at Cana, they all went on a short trip to Capernaum, prior to the feast of the Jews. For John tells us that the "Jews' Passover was at hand, and Jesus went up to Jerusalem."

His disciples did not attend him on this visit, and, perhaps, no one of his family, as companions; but Jesus went to enter officially upon that ministerial work and doctrine which he came into the world to set up.

He went to the feast of the Passover as a loyal son of Abraham, and as one who came not to destroy Jewish law



with Divine sanction, but to fulfill that law. This Passover feast was as dear to his heart as to that of any other Jew; or as the fourth day of July and its annual festivities are to the heart of any patriotic American. This feast was annually celebrated at Jerusalem, the capital of the Jewish nation; and it was to perpetuate the knowledge and memory of Israel's deliverance by the angel of Jehovah, who passed over Egypt and slew the first-born male in every house. This feast marks the first of our Lord's ministry; and it occurred between the tenth and seventeenth days of our April, A. D. 27. Of course, Jesus had been to Jerusalem before this time to this great annual feast; for he was now, according to Luke, about thirty years and some months old.

But this feast marks a new departure. He had never been to one as a public Teacher and Minister before. He went to this one as the recognized Messiah and acknowledged Lamb of God and Redeemer of men, as well as a duty-bound Jew. And at this feast, he began to exert himself. He acted with Divine authority, and taught with the same. He won admiration, and gained the attention and confidence of the great, as well as that of the common people, who saw and heard him gladly.

#### SECTION A.—JESUS SANCTIFIES THE TEMPLE.

John ii, 14-25.

Jesus had visited this beautiful capital city of the Jews many times before this visit to the first Passover of his ministry; but never before in the same capacity as now. The feast of last year found him still at Nazareth, working at his trade, and only by the world known as the son of Mary and Joseph. But he went now as the recognized Son of God, who had been so pointed out to John, the baptizer, and, by his first miracle, known to his disciples.

He went there in the full license of Divine power, which he had never exerted before. He was not only able to use Divine and miraculous power, but he did use it in working many miracles that we have no record of. John says, as the only reporter of this visit, "Many believed in his name when they saw the miracles which he did." We perhaps would have some detailed mention of these miracles if any one of his disciples had attended him; but since none did, John, learning through witnesses that Jesus did perform miracles, simply mentions the fact, not being able to give details.

It is perfectly natural that Jesus worked miracles on this occasion, at the feast; for he began his public ministry, his teaching, and assumed the august title of Messiah, who was the expected Redeemer and Deliverer of Israel.

And the only credentials of Jesus were his supernatural powers. He came from the Father to represent Him; but the Father was not there to testify of his authority; therefore he made him a living Witness to the people by supernatural powers. He needed to demonstrate his genuine Sonship and Divine mission by miracles and signs, which he did. He did this to prove, also, beyond reasonable doubt, that he was no impostor or false Christ; but the Divine Teacher, come from God.

His visit was of a twofold nature: First, to inaugurate there, at the head of the Jewish nation, his spiritual kingdom; and second, to celebrate the Jewish emancipation, which he, doubtless, had been accustomed to do.

So, the first thing he did, in establishing his cause and spiritual kingdom, was to set aright the perverted use of his Father's house. This house, or temple, in which his Father dwelt, and in which His laws were to be taught and precepts of holiness enjoined, should ever be a consecrated house and holy place. It should ever remain as it had been appropriately dedicated. But the use of this holy

house had been polluted. Instead of using it alone for Divine worship, it was used as a mart.

So when Jesus went to the temple, full of holiness and burning zeal, nothing could be more disgusting and abominable to him than to find, in the holy house of his Father, those that sold oxen and sheep and doves, and the changers of money, sitting. Instead of such a sight, he should have seen a host of penitent supplicants, pleading for mercy and the forgiveness of sins. He should have seen a host of Simeons and Annas, waiting for the Consolation of Israel. He should have seen the priests and scribes, searching the Scriptures, and ready to receive him whom those Scriptures pointed out so accurately, even Jesus of Nazareth. He should have seen a host ready to receive him upon his Messianic proclamation; and those ever ready to guard the holiness and sacredness of the place. But alas! instead of finding the above hosts, he found traders and mercenary characters, who had turned the use of the house into trafficking and a mart of exchange. They were no longer zealous regarding the sacredness of that house; nor did they care for its holy, consecrated dedication. Their concern was worldly gain at any cost or perversion. They indulged their sacrilegious consciences by the pretentious claim that they convenienceed the contributors to the Temple, by making exchange for those from afar.

But Jesus did not approve of any part of such perversion; and he showed his disapproval, in the beginning of his ministry, and again at the end, when he cleansed this same sacred house. He did not only deprecate this improper use of the temple, but emphasized his disapproval by a forceful act. Let John tell it himself: "And when he had made a scourge of small cords, he drove [with it] them [the buyers and sellers] all out of the temple, and the sheep and the oxen; and poured out the changers' money, and overthrew the tables."

So much for the act. Now, the apostles do not put this act down as a miracle; neither do Bible scholars of to-day; but it certainly carries with it great authority, which is backed by Divine indorsement. It is a great rebuke to the temple profaners, and reproof to the lethargic priests and Levites who had charge of the temple. They could forever see the pollution of the temple on the merest approach of some poor, knowledge-seeking Gentile; but could not see, and did allow, this wretched traffic to go on. Jesus drove them out, as a prophet and religious teacher who was full of zeal.

We do not understand that he used the small ropes to beat out the men, but the cattle. With authority, he ordered out the men; and with his strong hand—made stronger because right—and penetrating eye, looking at the exchangers, he overthrew the tables and poured out the money.

No act of Jesus, at any time, was more positive and significant than this one. No one was more daring and exemplary. By his own hand he cleansed his Father's house. He wiped out uncleanness, and restored cleanliness. Thus he laid down an everlasting example. This example teaches us that there is a right use and a wrong use of the house of God. It teaches that no gain of earthly good can justify a wrong use of the Church of Christ. That house is built for religious worship, and that alone. It is the place set apart for the Holy Presence; and whatever comes there aside from reverence, seeking knowledge and forgiveness, or to do homage, is displeasing to God. There may be a desire to do or carry on things in the church for its material benefit; but anything carried on without Divine sanction is sinful and desecrating. And there is no Divine sanction if the tendency is to dishallow the church and make it common; or if the act rob the church of its influence over sin, and render it ineffectual.

Social festivities, fairs, raffles, and all such amusements to raise money for churches, may help the cause some; but by this act of Jesus they are all condemned. For these very things mentioned were carried on in the temple to bring temple revenue; yet they were driven and thrown from the holy place. But, if this way of raising means had been justifiable, Jesus never would have condemned it; and if he condemned it in his day, at the very beginning of his Church, it is evident that he does now, when the Church is more able to support itself.

There is great need of reformation on this line of Church activities. O may the day shortly come when every minister of Jesus Christ will, with his own hands, cleanse and purify the Church of every sinful and unholy method of raising revenue!

Thus far, we have only looked at the act of Jesus; but we now turn to hear him speak of this unholy practice in the temple. After we hear his words we shall be better able to judge his motive; we can better look into his condemnation of it. Hear what he says to those that sold doves, "Take these things hence; make not my Father's house a house of merchandise." Here we see that Jesus did not only condemn by an act of driving out the traders, but prohibited the return, or even the presence, of such things in his house. He said, "Make not my Father's house a house of merchandise;" showing that such practices as the above festivities do pervert the true use of the house of God, and thereby cause it to lose its power. Such practices do make it a house of merchandise.

Now, the Jews, a very superstitious people, walked up and asked Jesus what sign did he show by his act. Jesus replied, in simple yet prophetic language. He said, "Destroy this temple, and in three days I will raise it up." This language is the first he uttered pointing out his death, and that he would die and rise again. He was misunder-

stood; and that misunderstanding, which he never changed, bred for him hatred, and created deadly enmity, which haunted Jesus to the last hour of his life and after he was in the sepulcher. His enemies thought he spoke of the temple then standing, built by Herod the great, and had been under construction, for all of its parts, forty-six years. But John says he did not mean the temple of Solomon, rebuilt, but that of his physical body, which was the temple of his soul. By the language of Jesus, he meant that if they put him to death and bury him, the grave would not be able to retain him; but that he would rise on the third day. At any rate, his language was painful to the Jewish hearts, which misunderstood him. And they considered that he was a vile blasphemer; and when Jesus was before the court, on trial for his life, the Jews got two men to say, "We heard him say, I will destroy this temple, and in three days I will raise it up again;" and upon such false and prejudicial testimony they found Jesus guilty of blasphemy.

#### SECTION B.—JESUS DISCOURSES WITH NICODEMUS

John iii, 1-21.

Jesus is still in Jerusalem attending the Passover. He was seen to pass through the streets each day among the great multitudes. Here and there, along the streets and at the temple, he performed many cures. Doubtless he healed the sick, gave sight to the blind, cured paralytics, and cast out devils. John simply says, "He did miracles, and many believed on his name."

Now, among those many who believed on his name were some of the rulers and rich, as well as the common people. And one of those rulers who believed was very rich, and named Nicodemus. He was very unlike most rich men, and even unlike his fellow-rulers of the Jewish Sanhedrin. He decided that he would call on Jesus, and



learn of him. He doubtless tried to get other counselors to go with him to make this call; but it seems that he was unattended on this visit.

John tells us he came to call on Jesus by night. And this statement has elicited much comment as to why he came by night. Some think it was through fear of the Jews; but there can be found no good reason for such conclusion; for Nicodemus was not that kind that had very much fear about him; for we find that he stood up and spoke for Jesus after this, when Jewish hatred was accumulated against Jesus. He spoke in favor of Jesus when he was being tried for his life. He ventured to aid in giving him a decent burial, and was a believing disciple of Jesus. Again, Nicodemus was a man of both mental and financial ability, and had such independence that his influence could not be easily curtailed; hence there was no real need to fear.

Others think he came by night as a better opportunity for himself and for Jesus—the one to hear and the other to teach. This is, in my mind, the true reason. Nicodemus, being a counselor and a man of many business duties, had really no satisfactory time to come in the day. He could learn, also, of the busy life of Jesus, and that it would be impossible for Jesus to say to him what he wished to learn in the streets or in the crowded temple, where intense excitement prevailed. So, at the cottage of some friend with whom Jesus was stopping, Nicodemus decided to call at night. The evening drew on and the night fell; and, at an early hour, Nicodemus rapped at the door. The rapping is answered, and lo! entered the hoary-haired ruler. It is Nicodemus, a man of wealth and great social and civil standing. He had never entered this humble cottage before, and seldom walked this street. His walks were on the principal streets, and in the business parts of the city. Why was he here to-night? This question ran through



the breast of every inmate of that home. But the great ruler told his business, and made known the fact that he came to call on their distinguished guest, Jesus of Nazareth. Into a room of quiet and repose he was led, and introduced to Jesus of Nazareth. For the first time, in all probability, he looked upon the serene and glorious face of this Teacher of Galilee. The same is true in the case of Jesus; he had possibly never seen this venerable-looking ruler. Jesus, though weary and tired, was glad to see him; and Nicodemus was thrice happy to gain admittance and be received by One who he felt had wonders to tell him. The ruler was able to ask questions; and, what gladdened him, he knew his Teacher could answer. So the conversation began.

\* SUBJECT: *The New Kingdom.*

Of course, Nicodemus had heard much of Jesus; of his being, by some, acknowledged the Son of God; of his doctrines, his miracles, both at and away from Jerusalem; and of the expectancy of his being the Deliverer of Israel. So Nicodemus came to inquire of this new kingdom which was about to be set up, and its doctrines of government and requirements. The miracles had convinced him that Jesus was no ordinary person, but of Divine authority. This being all settled in his mind previously, he was ready to embrace any move or doctrine which Jesus would set forth looking toward establishing any kingdom of Jewish origin to upset, as he thought, Roman authority, if not destroy it.

The Jews at this time were a subjugated nation, paying tribute to Rome; and while looking for a Messiah, as the children of Abraham, they only looked for him as a Jewish deliverer, and one to rule other nations with a rod of iron and hold the Jews as subjects of special favor. They wholly misunderstood their Scriptures respecting the Messiah. And they looked for a temporal and worldly kingdom with

an eternal ruler. They looked not for a spiritual ruler and a kingdom of righteousness in men's hearts; hence, they were quite unprepared for their King when he came. Thus we see how Nicodemus came, and how unprepared he was for his visit, after all. He came to talk of an earthly kingdom, and of an earthly government that would free the Jews, or in which they could at least find great encouragement.

He addressed Jesus in a very becoming and yet flattering manner. He said in the outset, "My Master, we know that thou art a teacher come from God." Then he went on to give his reasons for their faith in him, "For no man can do these miracles that thou doest, except God be with him."

Now, Jesus knew Nicodemus's mind, and he hastened to set him right regarding the kingdom which he came to establish. Jesus, at the very outset, gave him to understand that he would have no affiliation with the kingdom expected by the Jews, or any earthly government; but that he came to establish a spiritual kingdom, one whose laws would be Divine in origin and spiritually understood and obeyed.

He gave him to understand that the subjects of his kingdom were yet all to be born, and that none could enjoy its citizenship without being born into it through a heavenly and spiritual birth. So Jesus very solemnly led off, and virtually, in a Jewish sense, swears that, "Except a man be born again, he can not see the kingdom of God." Jesus told Nicodemus that he could not, without being born again, see the kingdom of God, which he came to represent. To see, here, has the force of understanding that kingdom. Thus, Jesus would say to Nicodemus, "You come to inquire of my kingdom and government; but no man can understand the terms and principles of my government except he is spiritually enlightened from above."

But Nicodemus asked: "How can a man be born when he is old? Can he enter the second time into his mother's womb and be born?"

Jesus does not use language wholly unfamiliar to Nicodemus, because the Jews spoke of the Gentile proselyte as being born again when he entered the Jewish religion; but while the language is familiar, the thought is foreign. It is not understood by the ruler. By Jesus' using the solemn Jewish oath concerning this matter, Nicodemus was more impressed, and saw that Jesus meant more than what they did concerning the proselyte. So he wants to know, "How can this new birth take place?" Then the blessed Jesus, who is always ready to give knowledge to them that ask, and enlightenment to those that seek, told the ruler the source of this new birth. He rejoins: "No, it is not by re-entering the womb when one is old and being born; but verily, verily, I say unto thee, except a man be born of water and of the Spirit, he can not enter into the kingdom of God."

Here, Jesus advances in ideas, which he amplifies. He tells what is the source or womb of the new birth; namely, the water and the Spirit; then gives him to understand that the birth of these two is the sure and only passport into the kingdom; for, without this credential, "He can not enter into the kingdom of God." Here, kingdom of God means the true Church of Jesus; first below, and then above. The Savior further told the ruler that "That which is born of the flesh is flesh; and that which is born of the Spirit is spirit;" then told him to not marvel that he said a man must be born again.

Then Jesus repeated, almost, himself: "I am authority, and teach it, as the Teacher of this new doctrine pertaining to entering the new kingdom of God." He then turned and commented upon his doctrine of the new birth, and said to the ruler, "It is like the wind that bloweth where it listeth, and thou hearest the sound thereof, but canst not

tell whence it cometh, and whither it goeth." This was quite a familiar thought to the ruler regarding the wind's "whence" and "whither;" yet it was an inexplicable thought. He knew, by his senses, that the wind came from some source, and went; but he could not tell of that source. If, then, the Teacher teaches a mysterious new birth, as being as mysterious as the source and destiny of the wind, why, the ruler must accept it. This was, doubtless, his conclusion. But, when a man is coming to the light, he struggles, and is very inquisitive; so the ruler asked one more and final question. He said: "Well, Teacher, you say these things must be; but, how can these things be? That is, how can they take place? What is the method and order thereof?"

Then Jesus appealed to his ability and position as ruler in Israel; and suggested that he should know of such things better than he seemed to know. He then placed himself and his disciples on the opposite side of the teaching ruler, and said: "Verily, verily, we speak that we do know, and testify that we have seen; and ye receive not our witness. If I have told you earthly things, and ye believe not, how shall ye believe if I tell you of heavenly things? And no man hath ascended up to heaven but he that came down from heaven, even the Son of man, which is in heaven."

Here Jesus expressed the Divine knowledge which his followers may possess of him and of their salvation while in the flesh. This informs us that "We may know Jesus and the power of his resurrection in us; that, whereas, we were blind, we now see."

Then Jesus made known to us the doctrine that he is everywhere. He said, "The Son of man which is in heaven," and meanwhile he sat in Jerusalem, talking with that Jewish ruler.

But Jesus does not only teach the doctrine of his ubiquity, but that of his prescience. He teaches that, as Moses lifted the brazen serpent in the wilderness to save

life from death, even so he would be lifted to give life to all who believe. Hence, he predicted his death thus early, and this, the second time.

Then he turned and changed the tone as well as tenor of his conversation; and made known to the ruler a great truth underlying the whole plan of salvation; namely, that God loves the world. And, though he be Jesus, and Nicodemus a ruler, yet he did not, with all the understanding they both possessed, attempt to describe that love of God for the world. He simply said, "He so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son" to save it. He also corrected a Jewish error of teaching, "That God would, on behalf of the Abrahamic seed, destroy the Gentiles, at the coming of the Messiah," by saying, "God sent not his Son into the world to condemn the world; but that the world, through him, might be saved." Then he gave the requirement—which is, faith in the Son. He said, if the Son is accepted by faith, as the representative of God, the receiving soul is saved from condemnation; but if that Son is not believed on, it is condemned already. And the condemnation is in the fact that Jesus has come with the light of knowledge; but men reject him, preferring to stay in darkness, because their deeds are evil.

He then taught a truth that is ever plain; namely, "Every one that doeth evil hateth the light, neither cometh to the light, lest his deeds should be reproved; but he that doeth truth, cometh to the light, that his deeds may be made manifest, that they are wrought in God."

Thus ends the first recorded discourse of Jesus. It is with a Jewish ruler at Jerusalem. It embraces the foundation doctrine of the Christian Church; namely, a second and heavenly birth, however inexplicable and mysterious; also, faith in the Lord Jesus Christ, as the means to bring one from under natural condemnation. This discourse might be looked upon as giving us our foundation-stones and pillars; all else is the superstructure.

## SECTION 1.—JESUS BAPTIZING IN JUDEA.

When the Passover had ended, and Jesus finished his work of teaching and miracles in Jerusalem for that time; and when he had had that memorable discourse with Nicodemus, the Jewish ruler, and laid the foundation doctrine of his kingdom, he left Jerusalem, and went into the country and smaller towns of Judea, and began to baptize into his kingdom; that is, every one who believed in him and desired discipleship was admitted into his kingdom by receiving the ordinance of baptism.

Jesus thus began his real work in Judea, as a follower of the Baptist, who said, "One cometh after me who is preferred before me." There are many conjectures why Jesus began his practical work in country parts, and not in the city; but the most plausible seems to be that his disciples could more freely accompany him in the country districts than in the city, with more complications; and Jesus could find more time to instruct and prepare them for their great coming work. Certainly, Jesus needed to instruct the five men—the number thus far who were disciples—that they might begin their work of teaching and baptizing converts. These men had thus far had no training; and Jesus tarried in the country parts during the next five or six months, baptizing and teaching them. It would have been quite embarrassing to these Galilean fishermen to be placed in the great Jewish capital, in the outset, to aid in establishing a new kingdom. This embarrassment would have come out of their uncouth decorum, their dialect, and ignorance of the principles of the new kingdom. Thus we see that Jesus held those same men away from Jerusalem throughout his three years' ministry, and even after his death, till they were especially prepared, by supernatural eloquence, to represent the new kingdom.

Jesus began the practical work of his kingdom by baptism, an ordinance forever to be kept up in his kingdom



as the door of admission. He had said to Nicodemus, "Except a man be born of the water and Spirit, he can not enter into the kingdom of God." So here Jesus began to practice what he preached; that was, to baptize.

This ordinance was to be a sacrament throughout the generations of time, and serve as a distinguishing feature to mark off those who are Christians from the unchristian. This ordinance was to point out an inward and spiritual cleansing; for Jesus said, "A man must be born of the water and Spirit." The water, a symbol of cleanliness, for the body, and the Spirit for the soul. One outward, and the other inward, acting at the same time, make the man a new creature in Christ Jesus.

There seems to be some question whether Jesus baptized or his disciples. John, our only reporter, says (iii, 22), "Jesus tarried with them [his disciples], and baptized." This says, it seems, that Jesus himself, with his own hands, did the work. But when we read Chapter iv, 1, 2, the same writer, referring to the same affair, says, "Though Jesus himself baptized not, but his disciples," we see a need to harmonize the two passages. This, however, is easy. We note that Jesus is the author of the sacrament of baptism, and he instructed as to its observance; hence, this credits him with the act, even if he did not perform it; for what, even now, one authorizes, he is said to do it. So if Jesus did not, or if he did do the work, the two passages do not conflict. The disciples who were left at Capernaum, doubtless to close up their business relations to follow Jesus, now rejoined him in Judea. And since the act of baptism is wholly mechanical, and could be performed by any disciple without due preparation, there was no need, with five men, that Jesus baptize himself. However, there is no real reason to believe that Jesus did not do the work with his own hands for some time. We know he was ready and willing to do any act that would help him fulfill all righteousness. He was ever ready to teach his disciples,



both by precept and example; and it may be that he did himself baptize in the early part of his ministry.

It is here that we have the first mention of Christian baptism. Of course, John's baptism was not a Christian baptism. It was unto repentance and preparatory. It was not in the name of the Father, Son, and Holy Ghost; and it was simply by the voice of one crying in the wilderness, "Prepare ye the way of the Lord."

It is singular that we have here at the foundation of this ordinance no mention as to its method. Whether by immersion or pouring or sprinkling, we are not told. There is not even any mention of the place, as to whether it was in the creek or pool or in the house. Indeed, there is no mention of method or manner. It is only said, "Jesus tarried in Judea, and baptized."

Certainly the immersionists have no grounds here, at the beginning of Christian baptism, to assert their method as the correct one. And the affusionists have no reasons by which they may boast of their way; and yet there is nothing condemnatory; for John only mentions the fact, without using a single qualifying term.

The great stress then, as Jesus leaves the subject, is to be placed upon the act and not the manner. In this, the cradle of the ordinance, Jesus says nothing of how to do it; and when he had spent three years in establishing his kingdom, and took his final departure from the world, his parting command is, "Go ye, therefore, and teach all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Ghost." This act, he says, do to all nations. When it comes to the human family, Jesus specifies. He says "all nations;" yet he uses no qualifying term as to how the act of baptism shall be performed. The virtue is not, then, in the method of applying the water; but in applying the water in the Divine names. Jesus, then, after a stay of several months in Judea, went out northward into Galilee.

SECTION 2.—JESUS VISITS AND TEACHES IN GALILEE. CON-  
VERSES WITH SAMARITAN WOMAN ON  
HIS WAY THITHER.

It was near the middle of April, A. D. 27, when Jesus went to the feast of the Passover. He then, shortly after this festival, went into the country of Judea, and baptized with his disciples. He remained in the Judean country till winter; then, about the first of December, he went north into Galilee to teach. By looking on the map of the Lord's Land, we see the correctness of John's language, that, passing from Judea unto Galilee, one needs to go through Samaria. Thus, on this journey to Galilee, while passing through Samaria, Jesus came near to Sychar, a city of Samaria, and, being wearied with his pedestrian journey, decided to stop and rest. And the place for this temporary rest was at the well which Jacob gave to his son Joseph many centuries before. Jesus sat on the well, and sent his disciples into the city to buy something for them to eat. It was about midday, and a woman came out of town to draw water from this famous well. When she approached she saw Jesus sitting on the well, and he asked her for a drink of water. But seeing he was a Jew, it was a great • surprise to her when he made such a request; for the Jews had no dealings with the Samaritans.

But before we notice the conversation of Jesus with the woman, it is worth while to notice, briefly, the hostile relations between the Jews and the Samaritans, which showed up in the surprise of the woman being asked for a drink of water.

The hatred between the two races originated on this wise: About 720 B. C., Shalmanezzer carried Israelites captive into Assyria; and the captivity was so great that it left their cities waste; and they remained thus until the Assyrian king brought men from Babylon and from Cuthah

and from Ava and from Hamath and from Sepharvaim, and placed these foreigners in the cities of Samaria in the stead of the Israelites; and they possessed the land of Samaria. But, since it is not clearly known what king fully populated the land of Israel with this mixed population, we notice the claim of the Samaritans. They attributed their colonization to Esarhaddon or Asnapper; but Esarhaddon was doubtless the real actor in the new colonization. These new people were not Jews, and were idolaters. Their religion, besides, was not homogeneous; they, being from different lands and cities, had equally as many gods and religions. We read that "They feared Jehovah, and served their graven *images*, both their children and their children's children."

Now, when the Judeans returned from the long captivity and began rebuilding the temple at Jerusalem, these new, unjewish people desired to assist in that work; but the Judean Jews declined to accept the offer of the Samaritans, knowing their conversion to the Jewish religion could not be very thorough. Then the Samaritans passed over all friendly relations of affiliation and fraternities, and became open enemies to the real Jews. And they continued enemies and to harass the Jews until silenced by Hystaspes. These animosities thus begun grew on for centuries. And Manasseh, a man of the sacerdotal order, formed an illegal marriage with the daughter of Sanballat, the Persian satrap of Samaria, and because of such unjewish act, he was expelled from Jerusalem by Nehemiah. Thereupon Manasseh got permission from Darius Nothus, the Persian king, to erect a temple on Mount Gerizim for the use of the Samaritans. This rash act of Manasseh intensified the hatred of the Jews, and kept up the harassing of the Samaritans. Josephus says the Samaritans waylaid the Jews on their journey to the temple service, so much so that many from the northern portion of Palestine

would have to make a detour east of the Jordan for fear of their enemies of the Samaritans. The same writer says the Samaritans would enter the Temple, and scatter the bones of the dead, at night, to pollute the holy place and annoy the Jews. And when the Jews of Jerusalem would attempt to communicate to their brethren in Babylon the exact time of the rising of the paschal moon by means of beacon-lights, begun on the Mount of Olives, and thus flashed from hill to hill to Babylon, the Samaritans would raise rival lights, and frustrate those of the Jews of the holy city. All such annoyances were kept up from year to year, even down to the time of Christ, who himself was refused entertainment once in a Samaritan village because his face was set toward Jerusalem.

At any rate, Jesus, quite careless about Jewish prejudices and only anxious to save all the world, ventured to ask the woman for a drink of water, that he might have the privilege to offer her living water. Then, when he heard the woman's cavilings about giving him a drink of water, he said, "If thou knewest the gift of God, and who it is that saith to thee, Give me to drink, thou wouldest have asked of him, and he would have given thee living water."

Here we are to observe that Jesus called himself the gift of God, and points out himself as being in possession of the living water, and as being willing to grant it to her upon merely asking it through faith.

But the woman was something like Nicodemus. She was blind, and could not see that her conversationalist was the unknown gift of God. So she, using only the senses of physical organs, said to Jesus: "Sir, thou hast nothing to draw with, and the well is deep; from whence, then, hast thou that living water? Art thou greater than our father Jacob, which gave us the well, and drank thereof himself, and his children, and his cattle?"

Jesus spoke truly when he said to her, "If thou knewest who it is." How different would she have felt and talked if she had known that she was then talking with the Messiah, whom they looked for to tell them all things! She never once thought of the blessed Jesus being more than an ordinary Jew. Hence, following her senses and prejudices, like the ruler, she remarked, "Thou hast nothing to draw with, and the well is deep; whence, then, hast thou living water?" She never once thought he was himself the living water, and the well whence the whole earth may drink. She ignorantly asked him, "Art thou greater than our father Jacob?" little thinking that she was talking to Jacob's Lord.

But Jesus began to draw out and teach her by her own experience. He said: "Whosoever drinketh of this water shall thirst again; but whosoever drinketh of the water that I shall give him shall never thirst; but the water that I shall give him shall be in him a well of water, springing up into everlasting life."

When Jesus mentioned the fact that those who drank from the well of the famous patriarch would thirst again, the woman knew, by her own experience both in drinking and returning daily to draw, that he spoke what was most experimentally true and easy to be believed. But when Jesus spoke of another kind and superior water, one that forever allays thirst and wards off the burden of drawing daily and hourly, he aroused the curiosity of the woman; and she became very anxious for that new kind of water which Jesus claimed to give. Jesus magnified her curiosity, and enlarged her desires for the water he gives, by telling her, "It shall be a well springing up into everlasting life."

So much the woman craved that kind of water that she no longer wished only to know that it existed in the posses-



sion of Jesus: she no longer only wanted to hear of it, but wished to have it and drink to her soul's satisfaction, and thereby become free from thirst and the necessary burden of coming daily to draw.

One can not fail to see how anxious man is to find bodily ease and comfort. Then, if men will seek, ask, knock, labor, and strive hard for bodily ease and comfort, is it not strange that they are willing to do such little for their spiritual and immortal interests? The woman said, "Sir, give me this water, that I thirst not, neither come hither to draw." Here she expressed two reasons for asking for the living water; namely, first, that she thirst not; and, second, that she no more have need to come there and draw from Jacob's deep well. But both these requests show that this poor woman was seeking bodily ease and comfort only. But Jesus, as in the case of Nicodemus, must show this woman that he is not in the world to look after men's bodies, but their eternal interests. To draw this woman into the coil of his doctrine and mission of eternal life, he must, in some way demonstrate to her his Divine mission by supernatural wisdom and knowledge. To do this, he chose to enter the private affairs of her life, and tell her all about them. So he entered that most secret part then existing by saying (as though he meant to give her the new kind of living water, which she asked, but wished her husband present to share the same blessing), "Go, call thy husband, and come hither." But she replied, just as Jesus wanted her to do, "I have no husband." Now Jesus had his chance. He had drawn her out, and got her to testify, and he now used her testimony. He had the privilege to talk and tell her of her whole life. And we must not suppose that what John records is all that Jesus told this woman of her private life; for when she went into Sychar or Shechem, she said to her people, "Come, see a man which told me all things that ever I did." Thus Jesus be-



gan: "Thou hast well said, I have no husband; for thou hast had five husbands, and he whom thou now hast is not thy husband."

The woman was now drawn out of things and thoughts material into those that were spiritual. Jesus then had her mind, so he could pour in floods of spiritual water, which is indeed living drink. The woman showed her attitude when she said, "Sir, I perceive that thou art a Prophet." Then she referred to the custom of her fathers. She said, "Our fathers worshiped in this mountain." She referred to Mount Gerizim, on which the ancient temple, built by Manasseh, stood for Samaritan worship. Then, continuing, she said to Jesus, "Ye [Jews] say that in Jerusalem is the place where men ought to worship."

Then came the language from Jesus which is the keynote of universal Christian redemption. He said, "Woman, believe me, the hour cometh when ye shall, neither in this mountain [Gerizim, in sight, being pointed to], nor yet at Jerusalem, worship the Father. The hour cometh, and now is, when the true worshipers shall worship the Father in spirit and in truth; for the Father seeketh such to worship him. God is a Spirit, and they that worship him must worship him in spirit and in truth."

Here we should not fail to note a new revelation of God—that he is "our Father." Jesus, prior to this, has never spoken of him in such relation. What a blessed contrast between him and Father Jacob, of whom the woman falsely boasted; for she was not a genuine Jew. But we can boast of God as our Universal Parent, both of the Jews and Gentiles. But God is no father in the flesh, as were Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob; but he is such in the spirit—by faith. He is Spirit, and seeketh his children to worship him in the spirit and in the truth.

Then the woman replied: "I know that Messiah cometh, which is called Christ. When he is come, he will tell

us all things." Ah! Sometimes a man is told, to his sorrow or joy, all things about himself. This poor woman thought the Messiah would tell all the wonders and mysteries of earth and heaven; but here he only found it necessary to tell her all things of herself to convince her that he is the expected Messiah.

And Jesus here, for the first time, not only declared himself the Christ by a demonstration of omniscience, but by words of his own mouth, in most unequivocal language. After this Divine declaration, "I that speak unto thee am he," his disciples returned from the city with victuals. When the disciples returned, the woman, with her water-pot, remaining at the well, went into the city, and asked the men to go out to the well and see a man who had told her all things of her life; then asked, virtually acknowledging it, "Is not this the Christ?" Then she carried out a crowd of anxious seekers. There is something commendable about this woman's actions. As soon as she found the Messiah, and was convinced by him that she could gain of him the water of living knowledge, she went and got her friends to share a part. Meanwhile his disciples urged Jesus to eat, but, as in the temptation, he had been living on and was filled with the spiritual manna. And when his disciples asked, "Has any one brought him aught to eat?" Jesus replied, "My meat is to do the will of him that sent me, and to finish his work."

There was a great work pending to be done. Jesus knew of it, and was waiting only an opportunity. While talking of eating, he looked up and saw the woman's seekers coming. Then he said to his disciples: "Ye say there are yet four months to harvest? Lift up your eyes, and look on the fields; for they are white already to harvest." Of course, Jesus referred then to both the material and spiritual harvests. The time to one was four months, and to the other was as soon as the Samaritans could reach

them. He then encouraged his disciples to labor in teaching this people to come into the knowledge of the new kingdom. He told them that wage-earners receive their wages and gather fruit unto eternal life; so that the sowers and reapers shall both rejoice together. He sent them to reap that on which they labored not, that they might rejoice with those priests and prophets who had sown prior to their day and labor.

And for the words of the woman testifying of Jesus and for the words of Jesus himself, many of the Samaritans believed on him. And by the request of those believing citizens of Sychar, Jesus entered and remained in the city two days. After two days he resumed his journey unto Galilee.

### SECTION 3.—FRUITS OF HIS LABORS AND THE HEALING OF A NOBLEMAN'S SON AT CANA.

John iv, 46-54.

Jesus entered the old city of Shechem, vulgarly called Sychar, with his disciples, and spent two days, as noticed in the previous section, teaching and evangelizing the Samaritans. His labors there were not in vain; for he and his disciples won the confidence of the people of that place, and made some few disciples.

But it was not the purpose of Jesus to go to the Samaritans and dwell. And these two days would not have been spent here had it not been for the woman who first met Jesus at the well. So we soon see Jesus on his way again to Galilee. Finally he reached that section of the Holy Land belonging then to Herod Antipas, the slayer of John the Baptist.

After travel from Samaria, Jesus, with his disciples, reached his own section. He found himself again at Cana, where, shortly after his baptism and selection of five disciples, he turned the water to wine.

This miracle, as was seen in the previous chapters, had, with others wrought at Capernaum and at Jerusalem during the first visits of Jesus to these two places after his baptism, had its effect upon the Galileans. They believed in Jesus on account of them, and received him gladly as Messiah coming up from Judea. They had seen Jesus at Jerusalem at the feast, and the miracles he performed, and had heard his wonderful doctrine to the people, all of which prepared them, on their return, to talk of their countryman and believe on him.

Of course, the Galileans were only acquainted with Jesus as the son of Mary and Joseph of Nazareth, and were, therefore, accustomed to look on him with less honor and esteem. Jesus, then, was required to perform convincing miracles among his own acquaintances; for he felt, as other men do, that "a prophet is not without honor save in his own country." Jesus thus, very wisely, started his miracles among his own people, and among them wrought his first and second recorded miracles. Thus we see he removed all causes for doubt that he was the expected Messiah.

We do not know just how much weight of influence the miracles and doctrine of Jesus had in Galilee; but we know the Galileans afforded him a retreat when he was first thrust out or driven from Judea. They gave Jesus all of his disciples, and all of the holy women who followed him. The priests, the Pharisees, and elders of Judea never, at any time, gave Jesus any recognition as Messiah; and it was among them Jesus always found his enemies, and murderers in the end.

#### JESUS HEALS THE NOBLEMAN'S SON.

While Jesus was at Cana, a town on the road between Nazareth and Capernaum, a nobleman, of the court of Herod, we judge, came up from Capernaum, and reached

Jesus with an urgent request that he go down to Capernaum and heal his very sick child, who was at the point of death.

We have no certain knowledge who this nobleman was. Some suppose he was Palatinus, an officer of Herod's palace; others suppose it was Chuza, who was Herod's steward, whose wife was Joanna, mentioned by Luke (viii, 3); while still others think it was Manaen, who is mentioned in the Acts (xiii, 1); but just who he was will remain a secret till judgment. And it is immaterial who he was, since we know of his following Jesus afterward.

This noble courtier had surely seen some of the cures wrought by Jesus in his city of Capernaum, where he doubtless lived. He had also heard of the miracles of Jesus at Cana and elsewhere; and, like Nicodemus, he had about made up his mind that he was the Messiah, or some very extraordinary divine person. So he left his many duties, and came from Capernaum to get Jesus to go there and heal, if possible, his son. He certainly acted under an impulse of faith; for he personally knew nothing of Jesus. He came in behalf of his son, who had become so sick that the father was greatly disturbed and hindered in his business. The father had doubtless done everything that could be done by loving hands and medical skill at Capernaum; but his beloved child only grew worse. The father despaired of all earthly help. He felt that without other help than that abundantly used his son must die. So he came to Jesus; yet not without some doubts and questions as to whether Jesus would be able to relieve him. He showed his doubts by asking Jesus to go with him to his house. He was not like the centurion, who said, "Only speak the word, and my servant shall be healed;" but he thought if anything could be done at all, Jesus must be there at the bedside. He doubted the power of Jesus to heal at a distance. But we must suppose his over-anxiety had much to do with this

matter. At any rate, he approached Jesus, and besought him to come down and heal his son, stating the condition of the child as being near to death. But we notice that the first words of Jesus showed this man to be in a doubting condition. Jesus said to him, "Except ye see signs and wonders, ye will not believe." Yet we must not suppose Jesus was speaking only to this man, but, most probably, to all who heard him speak to the nobleman. Jesus knew what he could and was about to do; and he found it convenient not only to strengthen the faith of the nobleman, but that of all to whom he was speaking and before whom he was going to effect the cure at a distance.

This nobleman was somewhat like Naaman, the Syrian. Because he was a man of distinction he felt, it seems, that Jesus should go down to his house, and, if necessary, stand and perform some great acts for his sake and rank, and cure his child. So Jesus chided him for little faith; and would have him know that his faith was all needed to get his child healed; that distance and a fearful state of disease had no bearing upon his power to heal. While Jesus was still speaking of his faith, very urgent feelings and thoughts crept over the nobleman concerning his son; and he cried out to Jesus, as one willing to believe or do any other necessary thing, "Sir, come down, ere my child die." Surely, never more emphatic words ever fell from the lips of this man than the last three just quoted—"my child die." But it will be noted that this man came to Jesus when he had tried all human agencies for the recovery of his son. He then came in great distress and anguish. He had been tested as to the depth of his faith, and that had been found wanting travel on the part of Jesus, and wonders and signs. He found out that Jesus was going to do none of the things in the way he wished them. Then the nobleman cried, in seeming despondent distress, "My child die;" but it was just then that Jesus



spoke to him the words of consolation, "Go thy way; thy son liveth." How blessed is Jesus! When he seems farthest off and least concerned and liable to answer the prayers of his people, he is then nearest to them and ready to succor them. John says the man believed the word of Jesus, and went his way. And as he was going down, his servants met him, and told him, "Thy son liveth." Thus we see the healing remedy—it was that the man believed the word that Jesus spoke. This faith saved the child, and Jesus from the journey and the miracles and signs.

Then the father, full of joy and a growing faith in Jesus, asked the servants, "What was the hour when the child began to grow better?" and they told him, "Yesterday at the seventh hour the fever left him." Ah! the father had more strength added to his faith, for he remembered it was at that hour that Jesus said, "Go, thy son liveth."

So, with such demonstration of Divine powers, this nobleman no longer doubted Jesus. He went on to his city and house, and persuaded his wife and all of his children to accept Jesus as their Savior and Messiah. And Jesus had in this man a follower and friend henceforth.

#### SECTION 4.—JESUS RETIRES FOR A SEASON.

Jesus was verily man as well as God, and hence had all the weaknesses of man and was liable to man's temptations. He had, thus far, been a very active man since his baptism. From that act, in January, we followed him into the wilderness of forty days' fasting and temptation; thence to the baptismal grounds of John, where he gathered his first five followers, called disciples; thence to Cana, where he made the water wine; thence to Capernaum, where he briefly tarried and wrought miracles; thence to Jerusalem, in April, to attend the feast; and there he

wrought many miracles, cleansed the temple, and had the recorded discourse with Nicodemus. Thence he went into the country, and spent several months teaching and baptizing, and, about December, started, under annoyances from the Pharisees, to Galilee, out of Judea. On his way, teaching as he went, he stopped in Samaria, at Shechem, called Sychar, and talked at length with a woman near the city, as he was sitting on the well of Jacob; thence into the city, and spent two days, and resumed his journey to Galilee. He finally reached Cana a second time, and taught and cured the son of a Galilean courtier. This is a brief *résumé* of the work of Jesus from his first appearance at the Jordan to the end of that year. Of course, not one-tenth of the labors of Jesus has been written. We only have a few things mentioned. Thus we see that Jesus was a very busy man, and needed rest from his physical labors, which were always abundant. Therefore, we see him retire for a season, and we do not, for several weeks, hear of him anywhere at all. But another reason for this silence may be in the fact that he was then in the midst of winter, and found it impracticable to travel and effect much good. Yet during these weeks we can only imagine him in deep meditation and teaching his few disciples of the great commission lying before them. These weeks may have been spent in Nazareth, at the fireside of Mary and Joseph; or at Capernaum, in the house of Peter; or even in Cana, where he last appeared. At any rate, he left us, and did not allow us to resume his association again till next year—A. D. 28—late in March, at the second Passover in Jerusalem.

## CHAPTER V.

### THE SECOND YEAR OF OUR LORD'S PUBLIC LIFE.

#### SECTION 1.—JESUS AT THE SECOND PASSOVER IN JERUSALEM. HE HEALS AN INFIRM MAN AT BETHESDA.

John v, 1-48.

JESUS now reappears in Jerusalem, after a silence of several weeks, during the months of January and February, A. D. 28. There have been twelve months since he was here, and he comes now, late in March, and attends the Passover, between March 30th and April 5th. All the former festivals of his life in this city were observed by him only in a patriotic manner; but the one last year, introducing his public life, and this present one, do not only get his patriotic attention, but that of his redemptive scheme. He attended to things and thoughts Divine. He engaged in working miracles and teaching of the new kingdom of God in the earth. He was busy looking after the deliverance of men's souls while his race was rejoicing over the deliverance of their bodies. He was then concerned about man's eternal welfare, and was using his power and wisdom that man might be relieved, both body and soul.

We can see him in active service in the streets and in the temple, both teaching and healing diseases and infirmities of man. Not far from the temple, on the occasion of this visit, Jesus came to a pool or place of water called Bethesda. This water received its name from its peculiar

properties, which were curative. Bethesda means house of mercy. This place was a house of mercy because it imparted a cure for any disease at certain seasons. It wrought its cures of blindness, halt, and withered, specifically. Its cures were wrought periodically. The times seem to have been during the feasts, when the city was full of people to receive and witness its virtues. It also cured when the waters were troubled by the angel, who went down at these certain seasons. The idea has gotten afloat that only one man could get a healing benefit at a time. This idea may have grown out of the language of the fourth verse of the fifth chapter of John; but if we read of the construction of this pool, we learn (verse 2) that it had five porches, in which a multitude of weak people lay, waiting for the troubling of the water. Now, there would scarcely be laid a multitude to get what only one man could receive. Doubtless the sense is, that the people, whatever was their disease, that first got into the water before the healing virtues ceased or were exhausted, were healed. This great physical blessing was certainly the special provision of God. It could not cure except when the angel of God was sent into it. It then, and not until then, and not after then, could cure, as we shall afterward see. As God prepared the waters of the Jordan to heal Naaman's leprosy, he did the same for these waters during the great feasts of the Jews, when they came from far and near.

This pool was at the sheep-gate, instead of sheep-market. This gate was used for the passage of the victims offered for sacrifice. Thus we infer that the pool gave special service in many ways to the temple. It may have been the special property of that sacred house.

Among the multitudes who lay in those five porches was one poor man with a disease of very long standing. He had been down with his sickness thirty-eight years. Of course, we must not infer that he had lain in those

porches that long. John does not tell us what this disease was, and we have no way to find out; but when we read the narrative, and thus diagnose the case, we conclude that his case was one of palsy. We note: his case was one of long standing; it was one that had baffled medical skill; it was one that had sapped all of his constitutional strength—he could not walk nor lift himself; hence, he must have been a paralytic. At any rate, Jesus came near and looked upon him, and was moved with compassion at seeing his emaciated condition and knowing how long he had lain in this state of suffering torture.

But Jesus—blessed be his name!—was not only sorry for the poor fellow—as many people are, and can, and yet will not help you—but decided to help him in the restoration of his long-lost health. But before doing this, he determined to draw out his faith, as he does every soul wishing his aid. He first asked him a question about, and only about, his physical health. He knew the poor fellow was ready and willing to talk of health, which, thirty-eight years before this, took wings and left him. He could interest this poor health-seeker in this subject as in no other way. And he knew, through his bodily maladies being rectified, he could reach his soul. If he could draw out his faith in the physical, he would have it for the spiritual. He asked the man the most desirable question in life, “Wilt thou be made whole?” or, Would you like to get well? This poor fellow, like Nicodemus and the Samaritan woman, was only thinking of that aqueous cure which he had waited so anxiously at the pool to receive. He replied, “Sir, I have no man, when the water is troubled, to put me into the pool; but while I am coming, another steppeth down before me”—that is, there is always some one in my way who gets the benefits.

But he who stood over the afflicted man then did not need to wait for the troubling of the waters, did not need

the waters at all, nor the angel to come and impart, for him, cures. He was over all, and greater than all diseases. He could rebuke them, and they would come out, if palsy, leprosy, lameness, deafness, or whatever their nature. The Master, with authority of his own, simply said to the man, "Rise, take up thy bed, and walk." Here one notices the brevity of speech and the mandatory order of words. "Rise," a thing the poor fellow had not done for many years; "take up thy bed," an act he had not been able to do since in this fix; "walk," something indeed joyful; "for if I could have walked," he might have said, "I would have been healed by the waters long since." Glorious was this blessing to him, for immediately he was made whole, and took up his bed and walked, on a glorious Sabbath-day. How simple, and yet how sublime, are the words and acts of Jesus! He there relieved a poor, afflicted man who had spent more than half of his life in helpless infirmity; yet he did not effect this cure by any extraordinary acts or words. Indeed, he put forth no act at all; he only spoke, and at his word the disease fled; and the man obeyed by rising and gathering up his bed, and walked.

It was on the Sabbath when Jesus wrought this miracle, and, regardless of the good and blessedness of it, the enemies of Jesus, under the garb of regard for the sanctity of the Sabbath-day, complained of Jesus for doing this act on the Sabbath-day. But there is this lesson: that Jesus is greater than the Sabbath. He is Lord of it, and whatever is well done on that day, in his name, even to relieve suffering humanity, is well-pleasing in his sight, and has his Divine sanction.

And when this man walked about with his bed, it was very annoying to the jealous Jewish Churchmen. They chided him, saying, "It is not lawful for thee to carry thy bed." But the man referred to his Healer, and said in reply, "He that made me whole, the same said unto me, Take



up thy bed, and walk." Here, one will observe, he put his Healer before his chiders. And this was the very thing that the Pharisaic party was afraid of. They hated the influence of Jesus.

However, Jesus never works to be seen of men. While he had power to cure and did heal this long disease, he did not so much as tell the man who he was. There were reasons for not speaking of himself as the Messiah, as he did to the Samaritan woman; and he did not tell him that he was even Jesus of Nazareth, but, after the cure, conveyed himself away.

But after a time Jesus met him in the temple, and said, "See, thou art made whole: sin no more, lest a worse thing come unto thee." Here we have a revelation in these last words of Jesus: First, a further knowledge that Jesus knows all things; that he, Divinely considered, is omniscient; and second, that the disease of this man is the result of some unknown sin. And Jesus told him to sin no more, lest a worse disease or trial get him next time, as a result.

During the conversation between Jesus and the healed man, he learned the name of his kindest and most worthy Benefactor; and he left the temple, telling to those prejudiced Jews "that it was Jesus which had made him whole." We here get this lesson: that we should not fail to acknowledge Jesus to the world if he has made us whole from the contaminating disease of sin. Jesus blesses and saves us from our sins in order that we may testify of him in the earth and bring others to believe on him.

Now, when the Jews had learned for certain that it was Jesus who wrought this great and unquestionable miracle, they persecuted him, and, thus early in his ministry, sought to slay him, claiming, therefore, that he had violated the Sabbath-day by doing this act of mercy.

JESUS CLAIMS DIVINITY, AND DISCOURSES AT LENGTH  
THEREON WITH THE JEWS.

When the enemies of Jesus persecuted him, claiming that he had violated the Sabbath, Jesus openly claimed Divinity by placing himself equal to the Father in ability to work. He said, "My Father worketh hitherto, and I work." He meant to say, regarding the world and man, that both have required the unceasing energy and conservation of the Father from their first existence till now; and this energy and conservation have never been neglected or suspended a moment for the Sabbath or any other sacred time; and that he then, as Lord of the Sabbath, had put forth his hand in behalf of man, and would unceasingly work for him at any time, on or off the Sabbath, when for him a deed of mercy could be performed; since man was not made for the Sabbath, but the Sabbath for man. But for the very reason that Jesus made this righteous claim the Jews sought the more to kill him. Then Jesus modified his statement by saying, "The Son works in conjunction with the Father, and not alone; for alone he can do nothing." He thus showed his dependence upon the Father and the recognition of the Father toward him. He also claimed that he did whatever the Father does, showing an inseparable relation between them and oneness in all action.

Then he claims the love of the Father, which clearly shows that he was no usurper and not arrogant regarding his claim of Divinity; for had he been, the Father, in the face of the first commandment, would have repudiated him. Moreover, the love of the Father caused him to open up his full Divinity to the Son, and showed him all things that he does; and Jesus said he would show him greater works than they had seen, even such works as would make them marvel. And we know that the future acts of Jesus, known to them, such as raising the dead and healing all

manner of diseases, were marvels and greater deeds than they had ever seen.

Another claim that Jesus made, in carrying out this idea of Divinity, was that the Father committed all judgment unto him. This the Father could not and would not do if the Son was not his equal in wisdom and power. And the Father required all men to honor the Son, in his possession of wisdom and knowledge, even as they honor the Father, and so ordains that no man can honor the Father if he fail to honor the Son in the flesh. Him hath the Father sent; and he came from the Father, bearing the only given will and revelation of the Father.

Jesus further taught that eternal life will, by the Father, be given to every one who believes in his Word as the representative of God. And whoever cometh to the Father through his Word should not be left in condemnation, but passes from death unto life. Jesus said the hour is coming, and now is, when the dead shall hear the voice of the Son of God; and they that hear shall live. But what Jesus meant by "the hour now is, when the dead shall hear the voice of the Son of God, and they that hear shall live," is hard to find out. There may be instances where Jesus raised the dead and there is no record of it; or, it may be prophetic language referring to the daughter of Jairus, or to the son of the widow of Nain, or to Lazarus, who was raised at Bethany. Or, after all, this language may be spiritual in meaning; that is, the spiritually dead, who can only be quickened by the voice of the Son of God.

Here Jesus sets up another claim; that is, that the Son hath life to give and authority to execute judgment for the Father. This claim of Jesus, if he were not the Divine Son, would be the most abject blasphemy; for Jesus does not only claim Divinity, but that that nature is his, so much so that he can give life and has the duty of judgment upon his shoulders. And his own claim here would most effectively

stand against him, even to this day, had he not proven himself able to throw his voice into the ears of the dead and call again their spirits into them. He did raise the dead, and since he could bring back physical life into the dead of four days' standing, as he did in the case of Lazarus, it is certain that he can impart spiritual life to as many as trust him—and the Divine nature stands.

But Jesus declared that not one dead man only shall be quickened by his voice, but all the dead that are in their graves, both the evil and the good workers. Here he claims that there is to be a resurrection of all men—the good shall rise unto eternal life and happiness, and the wicked shall rise unto condemnation and misery. He claims that the resurrection of the dead will be through his voice. Just how this voice will be imparted we do not know, for he does not say. It may be, in the resurrection-day, he will but speak, as to Lazarus, and say to the millions of sleeping dead, "Come forth;" or he may order his angel to arouse with blasts of a trumpet; but they, in either case, he says, will hear and come forth.

Again, he claims no action independent of his Father; but all he does is in and by the Father. He does not even use his own will, but strives to do that of the Father who had sent him to do his work.

And the Father who had sent him would never leave him to testify of himself, because the testimony to himself would be disbelieved; but the Father would testify of him at all times by imparting Divine powers and wisdom unto him.

But, for the best and plainest testimony of him, he refers them to their own Scriptures, with the injunction, "Search them," and they will be my living witness; for they testify of me.

Yet, after such general and unquestionable testimony, he accuses them of stubbornness in willfully refusing to

come to and recognizing him as Messiah and Savior who would give them salvation. Their stubbornness, then, he assigns to the reason that they were without the love of God. Their willful opposition led them to dishonor him as the Son, and to cast him away as the One sent in the Father's name—a thing they would not do if one should come in his own.

Then Jesus gave them to understand that he would not and need not to accuse them, as they had wickedly and deceitfully accused him of violating the Sabbath by healing the infirm man; but that they already stood accused and condemned by their lawgiver, Moses. They made pretensions of regard for the sanctity of the Sabbath, and their very claims were their loudest condemnation, for they would at any time do an act of mercy to a sheep or an ox by relieving them on the Sabbath, yet they were infinitely less than man. But the law of Moses allowed such acts of mercy as Jesus did or as they did for the sheep and ox; but their inconsistency and hypocrisy were in that they could see wrong in Jesus and not in themselves. Thus Jesus accused them of not believing in Moses and not practicing his precepts; for if they did, they would believe in him. He further affirmed that, since they believed not the writings of Moses, their lawgiver and leader, whom they had studied during their lives, it would not be possible for him to get their stubborn hearts changed. And he did not, for those very Judean Jews died in their willful unbelief respecting Jesus.

SECTION 2.—JESUS PREACHES IN NAZARETH, AND IS  
REJECTED BY HIS TOWNSMEN.

Luke iv, 16-30.

Let it not be forgotten that Jesus has just left Jerusalem, where he attended the second feast of his public life. It is sometime in April, A. D. 28, and to-day we find him

returned to his old home, Nazareth, where he begins his public ministry of the Word. We have him during this entire summer in Galilee, visiting the towns, villages, mountain plains, and sea-coasts. But before following him thus, let us follow him into the synagogue and through a religious service of old Nazareth. Let us hear him engage in the chants and join in the prayer service.

Of course, he went there this time—the first, too, since his baptism, as far as we have any record—very different from previous times. He left for baptism; he returned now the Preacher of the new kingdom. And he did not return with demonstration of official pomp, but as the humble Shepherd of Israel, hunting the lost sheep.

Luke says, “He returned in the power of the Spirit; and his fame went out; and he taught in their synagogues.” And he came to Nazareth, and, as his custom was, he went into the synagogue on the Sabbath-day, and stood up for to read. And there was delivered unto him the Book of the Prophet Esaias (Isaiah). We here get an insight into the religious order of service of the Jewish synagogues; that the religious teacher would go through a form of Bible-reading from rolls of parchments, and then comment, by way of explaining and application, similar to the minister of this day.

We also note that visiting the synagogue on the Sabbath was the long custom of Jesus during his previous years there. But this visit was the most interesting and noted. When he stood up to read, the book of Isaiah was handed him. But why this book or roll? Did he ask for it; or was it handed him by request of the ruler; or was it providential or his own will that he got the very prophet who spoke so much and correctly of the Messiah? We think the whole matter was prearranged in the mind of Jesus, and that he purposely called for that prophet, and the desired roll was given. Jesus knew that his full time had arrived



to offer the gospel ministry to Galilee, and he then plunged in, only to be rejected. Jesus read in that division where it says, "The Spirit of the Lord is upon me, because he hath anointed me to preach the gospel to the poor; he hath sent me to heal the broken-hearted, to preach deliverance to the captives, and recovering of sight to the blind; to set at liberty them that are bruised, to preach the acceptable year of the Lord." And when he had read this blazing Messianic prophecy, so full of truth and melody, he closed the book, or roll, and gave it again to the minister, and resumed his seat. This reading was so glorious, from the lips of one so holy and attractive, that when he took his seat the eyes of all in the synagogue were fastened upon him. They had never so seen and heard Jesus as now. They knew him and did not know him. Thus, when he had gotten well both their eyes and attention, he began to comment by saying, "This day is this Scripture fulfilled in your ears." How true and gracious were his words! They and their fathers and the fathers of their fathers, for many generations back, had been reading that prophecy for seven hundred years, but had never seen its fulfillment till that day and hour. But Jesus himself said that very passage cited had been fulfilled by his appearance among them on that day. What joy it brought to them and to the world! Jesus was come with the Spirit of the Lord upon him; he was anointed to preach to the poor; he was sent to heal the broken-hearted; he was sent to preach deliverance to the captives and recovering of sight to the blind; he was sent to set at liberty those that were bruised; he was sent to preach the acceptable year of the Lord. O, what a mission! What tidings to a world ruined and mangled by the fall! What cheer and joy ought it have brought to the ears of those Nazarenes when Jesus said to them, "This day is this Scripture fulfilled in your ears!" No wonder that they all bare him witness, and wondered

at the gracious words which proceeded out of his mouth. But Jesus became more wonderful to them because he made such a claim for the passage, and because he was one of their own citizens. Then they wish to know, "Is not this Joseph's son?" Jesus knew their hearts and questionings, and prevented them, saying to them, "Ye will surely say unto me this proverb, Physician, heal thyself: whatsoever we have heard done in Capernaum, do also here in thy country." But Jesus said, in reply to such a proverb thrust at him, "Truly, I say unto you, no prophet is accepted in his own country." Here Jesus uttered a truth which is universally felt and known to be the truth, that where a man is born and raised he will get less honor and appreciative esteem than among strangers.

Then Jesus referred to some facts of their national history, and mentioned two cases; namely, the widow of Serepta and Naaman the Syrian. He mentioned the widow for her hospitality shown Elijah, when she fed him from an exhausted meal-barrel and oil-cruce. Likewise, Naaman, who received a cure of his leprosy when he believed on and obeyed the word of Elisha. But what was this reference for? Why did Jesus bring up such mention? It was to show that the true prophets of God have God's aid and protection, and that, though men turn from them and refuse to hear the Word of God by them, they only come short of God's blessings and drive away his help. There were, in the time of Elijah, many widows deprived of God's providence and blessings on account of national and personal disobedience shown the Word of God through Elijah; and, while Israel's widows were suffering, the Sidonian widow was being fed. And while Israel had many lepers, Elisha prayed for God to heal the Syrian. And what else could Jesus mean in his references but to predict similar judgments upon them for their rejection of him, coming from God with their deliverance? And they who heard his re-

marks understood them and their application, and they were filled with wrath that he had so reproved and threatened them. And in their rage they "rose up, and thrust him out of the city, and led him unto the brow of the hill whereon their city was built, that they might cast him down headlong," *unto death*. Here we have a crime. It is an assault with intent to murder the only Son of God and Savior of men because he told them the truth and warned them of future and certain dangers. What do we here gather? That men will reject the truths of the gospel. That they will even lay their hands of murderous intentions, at times, upon the faithful gospel preacher. Yet Jesus was not left alone. His work was not done, and his end had not come; so he, in some mysterious way, used his powers to get away from their bloody hands, and, "passing through the midst of them, went his way."

### SECTION 3.—JESUS TAKES UP HIS ABODE AT CAPERNAUM.

Matt. iv, 13-17; Luke, iv 31.

When Jesus had visited his own town, Nazareth, in which he spent nearly all of his life of thirty-three years, and preached with such marked eloquence, his townsmen, instead of receiving him gladly, with all the signs of Messiah about him, grew angry toward him and laid their hands upon him for death. Such wicked and inhuman treatment drove Jesus from their homes forever. We think it is not on record that he made more than one other visit there during his entire life, and he could do them no good on account of their stubborn unbelief.

But what a lesson here! They did not only drive away Jesus in their acts, but Jesus quit them on account of their wickedness, and went to Capernaum, where, in some way, he made arrangements for permanent and future dwelling. That town thenceforth became his headquarters. He

had been rejected, both at Jerusalem, the chief city of the nation and temple, and at Nazareth, his own home, by the Church parties, with such enmity that it was no longer safe to dwell among them; hence, he went to Capernaum. There may be some few good reasons given why Jesus chose this town after he was repulsed from Jerusalem and Nazareth. The following are some very probable reasons: First, while it was a city of Galilee, and formerly in the tribal possessions of Zabulon and Nephthalim, it, nevertheless, was then under Roman military control; and therefore, Jesus was less liable to Jewish interference. Indeed, there was only a weak colony of Jews in the city; so few and poor that they could not build themselves a synagogue. Second, there Jesus was to find quite all of his most influential followers and disciples. And it would be desirous to live among them and share their hospitality. Third, Capernaum was a large and prosperous city, and afforded Christ quite a field to operate in. Fourth, it was in keeping with the prophecy of Isaiah ix, 1, 2. But since Capernaum became the home of our Lord, and witnessed the most mighty of his works, it will be well to speak briefly of it in the time of Jesus. It was a Roman settlement, with a castellated fort, on a promontory overlooking the lake or sea. It was the seat of Roman taxation and government for Galilee, and had its military officers and soldiers to garrison the country. The Roman taxgatherers and noblemen lived there. Here our Savior called one of the tax-collectors from his receipt of custom to be his disciple. Jesus also healed here a man with palsy, and sent Peter to get his Temple tax out of the mouth of the fish; he healed a man with a withered hand; he raised Jairus's daughter; he probably converted Mary Magdalene; he preached of the "Bread of Life," and finally here predicted the damnation of this selfsame city for disobedience and a lack of interested faith in such works. This city could never ask nor want more

of Divine knowledge and a display of miraculous powers than it received, from time to time, through the presence of Jesus.

However, the stay of Jesus was never very long here, and at no other place, after he began to preach the gospel and to declare the acceptable year of the Lord. He was ever busy and going during the time, of about twenty-six months, that he lived after his coming here. Truly he spoke when he said, "The foxes have holes, and the birds of the air have nests; but the Son of man hath not where [and he might have added "when"] to lay his head." Jesus knew no rest nor ease of comfort when he set out to save a dying world. He was ever working and getting others to help him to work.

SECTION A.—JESUS CALLS ANDREW, PETER, JAMES, AND JOHN WHILE IN CAPERNAUM ON THIS OCCASION.

Matt. iv, 18-23; Mark i, 16-20.

Now, it must not be supposed that this is the first time that these men were called to be disciples. With one exception, John, all these went after Jesus a year ago, when John the Baptist testified of Jesus at Bethabara. And we noticed, in that connection, that the unnamed disciple there was, most probably, John; and his name is withheld as he himself is the reporter. If this, then, be true, the same men, except Nathanael, are called over. But why this second call? It should be noticed that the first was rather that of a winning nature. John's testimony of Jesus led all men to look to him as the Messiah, if they would accept any at all. John said repeatedly, "I must decrease, but He will increase;" and John, at this time, was in prison by Herod and his adulterous wife; and the disciples had followed Jesus in body and reputation for one year; so Jesus issued a final and divine call that they lay aside all things and follow him to learn of him and become fishers of men.

The call, then, was for life, and to forsake father, mother, sister, brother, and any other relative, and carry the Word unto the lost sheep of the house of Israel. He called them to labor, suffer, and die for a cause and faith which they would have to represent to the world. He called them, then, to become not only disciples, but apostles and pillars in his new kingdom.

Their call was on this wise: One day during this visit Jesus walked out beside the sea, and first saw Andrew and his brother Simon casting in their net, being fishermen. "And when he had gone a little farther thence, he saw James and John his brother in a ship mending their nets." And Jesus used these words, "Come ye after me, and I will make you to become fishers of men." And immediately these four men arose and left their nets and followed Jesus.

#### SECTION B.—JESUS CURES A MAN OF AN UNCLEAN DEVIL.

Mark i, 21-28; Luke iv, 31-37.

It must not be overlooked that we are still at Capernaum, where Jesus now had come for his first time to live. His previous comings were as a visitor; but different thenceforth. When he went out and returned from this time he went home. His calling the disciples, as given above, was during the week when these men were at their trade. But the Sabbath came; and Jesus was not on the seacoast, but in the city, and decided to go to the synagogue or to Church. He arrived there and began to teach. And his doctrine was of such a nature, so sublime and wonderful, and so forceful and with such authority, that the people were astonished at it. They were the more so, because it was so unlike the teaching and doctrine of the scribes.

And, there was a man with an unclean spirit; or "spirit of an unclean devil," as Luke has it. And Matthew says he, the man, "cried out, Let us alone; what have we to do



with thee, thou Jesus of Nazareth? Art thou come to destroy us? I know thee who thou art, the Holy One of God.”

We are here to notice that this man was possessed of this unclean spirit; that this spirit, after getting into the man, brought the man under his (the spirit's) control. The spirit used the man's muscular powers by causing the man to speak. The devils prayed to be let alone; the spirits asked whether Jesus came to destroy them before the time; they claimed to know Jesus to be the Holy One of God.

Jesus, then, rebuked the spirit who claimed companions of uncleanness, and said, “Hold thy peace, and come out of him.” This voice and command of Jesus was the voice and the command of God; and the devil, though regrettingly, came out crying aloud and tearing the poor demoniac.

The devil had completely mastered the man for an indefinite time; but in turn, there, the Master of all unclean devils had come. “And the people of the synagogue and street were amazed, insomuch that they questioned among themselves, saying, What thing is this? What new doctrine is this? for with authority commandeth he even the unclean spirits, and they do obey him.” This act and great doctrine of Jesus, then, spread his fame over Galilee. This act of Jesus in the synagogue was like the miracle of Bethesda in Jerusalem, where Jesus healed the infirm man. Jesus was touched with compassion at seeing this man's condition of being enslaved by a den of unclean devils. The writer seems to start off in this narrative with one spirit of uncleanness; but when Jesus began to rebuke this devil he showed up companions. Notice the language: “What have we to do with thee? Art thou come to destroy us?” Then the devil speaks personally again: “I know thee who thou art, the Holy One of God;” which shows the unity and plurality of demons who were, perhaps, as in the tombs of Gadara, legion; for they were many.

This poor man did not make any special request of Jesus to be healed, as perhaps he did not know Jesus was present; or he may not have been in any suitable state of mind to be told of Jesus; but prayer or not prayer, Jesus pitied and acted upon his case. He came, blessed be his name, to set at liberty those that were bruised; and here was a special case; so Jesus delivered, in accordance with his grace, this poor soul from the prison of demon power.

SECTION C.—JESUS HEALS PETER'S MOTHER-IN-LAW AND  
MANY OTHERS AT THIS TIME.

Matt. viii, 14-17; Mark i, 29-34; Luke iv, 38-41.

Let it be kept in mind that we are still in Capernaum, on the occasion of the visit Jesus made to locate thenceforth in that city. Section B, of this connection, occurred on the Sabbath; and so did this section.

After the synagogue service and the healing of the demoniac of the unclean devils, Jesus went out and entered the house of Simon Peter. This house was not alone used or owned by Peter; but it was a joint possession; also owned by his brother Andrew. James and John accompanied Jesus, and the three doubtless went to take dinner with their fellow-fishermen, Peter and Andrew. When they reached the house of Simon and Andrew, they found the mother-in-law of Peter very ill. She was down and suffering with, Luke says, a great fever. This sickness threatened the pleasantness of the hour, and was sure to break up the opportunities of the disciples and inmates to sit with pleasure and listen to Jesus talk and teach. The occasion had doubtless been prepared for a pleasant and sociable hour. We need not suppose this sickness had been of long standing; and it may have been providential just then that the works of God might be made manifest. We think, without question, that if it had existed prior to that time the

Savior's attention would have been drawn to her; for Jesus doubtless lived at the house of Simon and Andrew. We infer this, first, because Peter and Andrew lived, it seems, at Capernaum, and were the foremost disciples in the call and rank. We infer this, second, because Matthew xvii, 24, 25, shows that when the tribute collectors wanted to find Jesus to collect his tribute they went to Peter's house to find him. At any rate, Jesus had never been spoken to about this disease before he came from the synagogue; and Mark says they of the family spoke to him as soon as he got to the house, for that is the meaning of the word *anon*. And this prompt manner of speaking to him shows they would have done so before had she been a long and great sufferer, for if even Jesus did not live at Peter's house he had been there on some occasion, for he had been in the city quite a week prior to this day. However, when the Master got to the house with James and John, and went in, the sad news at once reaches his ears, "Teacher, Peter's mother-in-law is very sick"—putting the stress of voice on "very." Then they felt that he could do something for her. Of course, they had heard the noble courtier of that city praising Jesus for sitting in Cana and healing by a word his son, who was now running the streets. They had heard of that poor demoniac who had just been healed at the synagogue, and of many others. So they came with confidence and boldness, and asked him to help the mother-in-law of Peter, who was so very indisposed.

Here is surely a good lesson; that we may pray for our friends, and Jesus will hear us and aid them because we ask him. The faithful and expectant prayer will win the attention of Jesus. However, there is no papal confessional prayer suggested here, by which man can intercede with God, or by which God, for man's meritorious sake, will aid another. The idea is that God, for the sake of his Son only, will hear our mutual prayers. Indeed, this is one of

those passages, anyway, that knocks the life out of papal celibacy; for Peter, the foremost disciple in call and rank, has a wife, and is very tender toward her mother, and certainly toward her. So there is not found in Peter, of whom our Catholic brethren boast so much as their head, very much example of their pretended holiness, which they do not wish polluted by the marriage of their clergy. Moreover, Peter's marriage is honored and indorsed by Jesus on every occasion that he had to speak of marriage. There was never heard a single word from the lips of Jesus condemnatory of marriage in any one of his apostles.

But resuming the subject: they prayed Jesus to help this member of the family. And it is interesting to note how readily Jesus went to work to grant the request of one for another. Jesus began at once to do what they wished. He is the ever-present and ready Physician. He was not indifferent and slothful in action, wondering where his reward was coming from. He had no need to inquire of the patient and diagnose the case, then send for some drug. But Luke says, "He stood over her." Matthew says, "He touched her hand." Mark says he "took her by the hand." Luke again says his words were his medicine: "He rebuked the fever and it left her." Matthew says the "touch" of Jesus was the healing balm; and Mark says his seizing her hand, showing he was not afraid of the disease, was the remedy used. Now, these three men report this case in their own independent way, which shows the purity of their writings and no collusion; but all arrive at one end, "The fever left her," and that is the end and object of the act and narration.

Now, the cure was not of a convalescent nature, but immediate; and the proof of this was, she got right up and began to help carry out the work of the occasion, which, as we have said, was probably a dinner meal especially prepared for invited guests.

## SECTION D.—JESUS HEALS, AFTER SUNSET, ALL KINDS OF DISEASES OF THE PEOPLE.

Matt. viii, 16, 17; Mark i, 32-34.

That Sabbath was a busy one for Jesus. At morning he got up early and made ready to do a big day's work, both by bodily cleanliness, arrangement of toilet, and devotion of prayer. Then at the hour he went to the synagogue, and his duty was performed in teaching what we would call a Sabbath-school. Yet his hearers were not simply children, but both old and young. After the service hour, or during the same, Jesus cured the demoniac. Then he went home to Peter's house, and there was the mother of the home burning with fever and very ill. Jesus healed her. He then dined and passed off a quiet afternoon talking and teaching in religious knowledge. Finally the Sabbath wore away at sunset, for the Jews measured their Sabbaths from sunset Friday to sunset Saturday. So when the Sabbath closed every one might have thought, "Now the Master will soon have opportunity to sit and rest awhile." But not so in this sin-smitten city on this day, among so many afflicted, sin-cursed, and devil-possessed people. For the people were only waiting for the Sabbath hours to pass, so they could come and bring their friends to the great Teacher and Healer. The sun was set and the Sabbath was gone; and they came in gangs of two, five, ten, etc., and from every quarter of the town they appeared. They came so many that all the city was gathered at Peter's house. They came and brought their friends of all diseases. There was no illness in the city that was not brought. The people were healed of their divers diseases; and the devils which had been tormenting humanity so long he cast out, suffering them not to speak, for they knew him.

Ah! that was indeed a great day in Capernaum. It proved the beginning of the year of jubilee. What a

Prophet and Teacher was come to them! How proud they ought to have been that he had come to Capernaum to live! What honor and immortal fame he brought to impart to this town! O, that they had appreciated Jesus and believed on him as they ought! But we will see later how they served their King and Lord.

#### SECTION 4.—JESUS MAKES HIS FIRST GENERAL CIRCUIT THROUGH GALILEE.

Mark i, 38, 39; Luke iv, 43, 44.

Jesus lived nearly all of his life, of over thirty years, in Galilee, with the exception of the short time in Bethlehem after his birth; the short time in Egypt, as an asylum from Herod the Great; and the several months spent in Judea during the feast, and after the first Passover in Jerusalem. But while he lived and walked in Galilee and was a Galilean, he had not, in all his days, gone out into this land of his as he then went out; for then he went out on a missionary tour of Galilee. He laid here the foundation of itinerant preaching, however distasteful it may be to some. For never after this journey did he cease to travel and preach and teach. Of course, I do not mean to say that Jesus intentionally started by this journey the itinerant system of the ministry as held by the Methodist branches, but simply to say this method has here a good foundation.

The public preaching of Jesus, begun at Nazareth, was to be carried on as such till his death, both by Jesus himself and his chosen disciples.

But before Jesus went out on this tour of Galilee, and to preach and teach, he felt the need of Divine guidance and help; so after the great labors of the first and memorable Sabbath in Capernaum, he went, Mark says (i, 35), a great while before day, and departed into a solitary place,



and there prayed. O what an example is here presented! The spotless Lamb and Son of God getting up a long time before day, and going out to a solitary place to pray unmolested. He prayed and made known his requests to his Father. He sought wisdom, and guidance, and strength for the general Galilean circuit; for then he went to the synagogues of the entire land. He did not only preach and teach, but cast out devils and healed.

#### SECTION A.—JESUS HEALS A LEPER IN GALILEE.

Matt. viii, 2-4; Mark i, 40-45; Luke v, 12-16.

It must have been late in April, for Jesus had done much labor and visited considerably since leaving the feast at Jerusalem. Just where he was in Galilee we can not say. This section of the Holy Land was almost a network of cities. Luke v, 12, allows us "a certain city;" while the other writers only speak of Galilee as the place where Christ healed. The first patient Jesus had to work on, of whom we have any record, in this first Galilean tour, was a leper, a man possessed of the most dreadful disease in the land. So dreadful was it that it was law to isolate every case of it, and persons being out were compelled to lift up a loud voice on hearing any human approach and cry out, "Unclean, unclean." The leprosy was an inveterate cutaneous disease, appearing in dry, thin, white, scurfy scales or scabs, either on the whole body, or on some part of it, usually attended with violent itching, and often with severe pain. The leprosy of the East was most loathsome, and so contagious that it affected one's garments and house, and was considered incurable. (Lev. xiii, 47, 48, and xiv, 34, 35.) This disease, therefore, rendered one dangerous and unfit for all social and religious privileges. One was treated as we treat in this day cases of smallpox, yellow-fever, or cholera. And any one who came in contact with this miser-

able disease was considered also unclean and undesirable for social order. Such was the case and first disease Jesus met with on this journey. This was the most trying and undesirable case Jesus had yet met with. It was a case with legal restrictions about contact and social order, two features that must come into prominence if anything could be done for it. It was a case that had baffled all human skill, and had no antidote. It was a case to test the Divinity of Jesus; for the Jews cherished no hope of a leprous cure, and knew no cure except God. There was a teaching among them, "That when the Messiah comes he will restore all things." And this case was so differently presented to Jesus. All other cases had been brought; or, like the impotent man of Bethesda, or the demoniac of Capernaum, their condition of distress had gotten hold upon Jesus, and they were healed. Not so with this poor offcast. No one brought him with tender hands while he lay upon a mat or bed, for it was contrary to law to touch him. No one pleaded with Jesus for him, as for Peter's mother-in-law, or as for the son of the nobleman of Capernaum. But somehow he had heard of Jesus doing great things, and who had not? He had, perhaps, been told by some who were anxious to see him cured to call on Jesus, who was coming his way. Others, to test the ability of Jesus, may have urged him to call on him for a cure. But somehow this leper had heard enough and learned enough to muster up in him a strong faith in the power of Jesus to cure him. Whether his faith was that Jesus was Divine, or that he was divinely endowed as a prophet, we do not know; but this man's language and his actions show that he had strong faith. Each one of the writers says, "He came to Jesus" upon seeing him. Ah! this is the true way of salvation. Men may stand and look at Jesus all their lives, and die in their sins. But let them learn from this leper here, whose disease has only God for its cure and has always

been used in religious parlance as a fit type of sin. Let them learn with the leprosy of their sins to come to Jesus; for they can never get well by staying away from him, and no other can cure their disease of sin. This leper did not come with any selfish pride; for his sinful pride was then killing him, just as sinful pride is killing every unconverted man to-day. He was feeling the sting of death in his mortified flesh, and that he was hourly hastening to the tomb. So he came to Jesus humbled and distressed, and fell upon his face—a sign of his true humility and utter degradation. And not only did he fall down, but worshiped Jesus and prayed earnestly, saying, “Lord, if thou wilt, thou canst make me clean.” Ah! me, what a prayer! Noted for its brevity, noted for its faith, noted for its truth, and noted to teach us to pray. This man was in great misfortune; but he was no fool. His prayer was among the wisest. He was anxious for relief from this burdensome disease, and he pleaded with Jesus for cleanliness only. The brevity of his prayer shows the anguish of his soul, and the character of it shows his faith.

There was in this man no lack of faith that Jesus could relieve him. Critics may have doubted and scoffers may have denied his real power to cure a case of leprosy; but this man was not in the gang of any kind of doubters. He said, “If thou wilt, thou canst.”

Then, upon the profession of his faith expressed, Jesus acted. And he always acts when men believe on him and come for help. The first thing Jesus did to cure this leper was strictly forbidden and ceremonially prohibited. “He touched him.” The questions might well arise, Why did Jesus touch the leper? Could he not have shown more power by effecting a cure with his word than by his hands? Why did he violate the law, since he came to fulfill the law? But the questions may be answered thus: First. Jesus was here called on to work a testing miracle; to do

what no man but God, in the faith of the Jews, could do. And as Jesus knew it was only prohibited to touch the person for fear of contagion, and that he was not afraid of taking nor imparting the disease, he touched to show that he was not in dread of it. The touch or bringing his body in contact with that of the leper whose very clothes and atmosphere were contagious, and not take the disease himself, was the highest proof of his Divinity. Moreover, the touching this poor man pointed out the full blast of the humiliation of Jesus, and helped to fulfill prophecy respecting his extreme steps of abnegation to save men. As to the question of his word or power put forth to cleanse, it may be answered that Jesus did not distinguish between his word and power. His word was power. And if he did touch the man, it showed no more power nor less than if he had said to the disease, Be gone. As to the question of his doing what the law prohibited, it may be said, since it was a law, and Jesus being Divine, he was the Author of that law through Moses, and therefore greater than the law; and if it were not a Divine law, he was not obligated to keep it. At any rate, when Jesus touched the leper he assured him he appreciated his faith, and would reward him for coming. So he said, "I will; be thou clean." And as soon as Jesus thus spoke the leprosy disappeared from the man's body, and he was whole and clean. What a reward of simple faith! Reader, has Jesus ever said to you, "Be thou clean?" How much he has to offer to you, if you will only come for it!

And when Jesus had stood the Messianic test of curing a leper, he charged the man to tell no man, but go and show himself to the priest and to offer for his cleansing what Moses commanded. But now, what did Moses command to be offered? (Read Lev. xiv, 4, 10.) But if the person could not present the things of verse 10, then he had to present those of verses 21, 22. These presentations

were for a testimony unto the people, that the priest had pronounced the leper clean. The effort of Jesus to keep the man from telling his cure, and the Physician, proved futile; for so much the more went out his fame abroad, and this fact drew great multitudes to hear Jesus and to be healed of their infirmities.

#### SECTION 5.—JESUS AT CAPERNAUM.

Jesus has made his Galilean tour, preaching and teaching in its cities, and now returns to his headquarters, Capernaum. This first general missionary tour required about two months of his time—at least our May and June. His trip was not other than a great success in demonstrating his Messianic power and authority by teaching and miracles. On this journey he made many converts, who came after him from every quarter. His doctrine was new and effective, and his power to heal caused the people of Galilee to stand and wonder with amazement.

It must not be forgotten that after the great miracle of this Galilean tour, in which Jesus cured the leper, near the end of this journey he met with considerable resistance from the Pharisaic parties, by whom he was held out of the cities. Wherefore Jesus retired into the desert and prayed over his trials and the efforts made to persecute him for such acts of mercy and doctrine. But not only did he pray for his bitterest enemies, but for strength to endure the contumely of men and to carry on the great work he had to do. This resistance and persecution, however, had something to do with furthering the labors of this time and visit, and caused Jesus to return to Capernaum earlier than he would have.

Jesus, let it be remembered, at no time used his Divine powers to meet his enemies and resist their attacks; but when persecuted in one place resorted to another. Where-

upon, we follow him now, after two months absence, back unto Capernaum. But while Jesus frequently fled from his enemies, as he tells us to do, in order that he might carry on his works, yet he never ceased to work. He was incessantly engaged in works of mercy and redemption. So when he came on this return journey into Capernaum there were brought to him the sick and afflicted, that he might heal them.

#### SECTION A.—A PARALYTIC HEALED.

Matt. ix, 2-4; Mark ii, 1-12; Luke v, 17-26.

The first subject of whom we have any record, brought to Jesus on this visit, was a man of the palsy. But before we speak of him we must look up the circumstances connected with his cure. Jesus was at this time in a private house, and not at the Jewish synagogue as when he cured the demoniac. We do not know whose house this was, but we infer that it was a room of Peter's house. Mark simply calls it "the house;" however, the adjective "the" is not used in the Greek. And when the people heard that Jesus was in the house, or home, they came to see and hear him, till there was really no room to receive them, not even was the yard large enough. Jesus took advantage of the hour and occasion, and began to preach to them the Word of God. And after, or in the midst of the sermon, four men came into the crowd bearing upon a kind of bedding this man of the palsy. We can imagine that each man was at a corner of the bed on which he lay. And that he was thus borne successfully to reach Jesus, and to prevent any further injury to his body, either by lifting or the pressure of the crowd. These bearers were doubtless related in some way to the palsied man, for they manifested much interest in him by their acts and faith in the power and willingness of Jesus to heal him.



When they reached the crowd, and found that it would not be possible to get through it to Jesus with their patient, they studied another plan of access. And this plan showed their determination and faith. The plan was that they would ascend to the housetop, which was flat, and take up the roof over where Jesus was, and let down the palsied man for a cure. Their plan, after getting permission, was undertaken, and worked well. Suddenly one inside could hear the tearing up of the roof; for Mark says some violence was done it. It was not a prearranged opening; and if it were, it was not large enough for the present use. Then suddenly one could see a man being lowered upon a bedding, with a request that he be healed by the Teacher. He upon the bed reached Jesus on the floor; and Jesus, seeing the faith not only of the sick man, but also of the other four who brought him, said to the sick of palsy, "Son, thy sins be forgiven thee."

We will do well to notice this disease a little more minutely, and we can appreciate the more its cure here wrought by Jesus. Palsy is the total loss or diminution of motion or sensation, or both, in any part. There are several kinds of palsy or paralysis, such as the paralysis agitans; the shaking, or as it is sometimes called, from the peculiarity of the patient's gait, the dancing palsy; hemiplegia, when one side of the body only is smitten; and paraplegia, when it is the lower half which is more or less deprived of its nervous power; but in all cases medical men say it is the brain which is the seat of disorder; and if this is confined to one of its hemispheres, the attack, if it does not include both sides, is most likely to fall on the opposite side of the body. But however the disease works and symbolizes, it had here in this man's case absolutely taken away his strength and disabled him in walking. Jesus, as a response to their faith, did not say, "Thou art loosed from thy disease of the body," but said, "Thy sins be forgiven thee." This shows

that the disease came on as a result of sin; this was the cause and source. But sin is the cause of all our maladies of both soul and body. Jesus, by bespeaking the removal of the cause, bespoke the removal of the effect, which was the disease.

Mark says there were certain scribes sitting there, who reasoned in their hearts, saying, "Why doth this man thus speak blasphemies? Who can forgive sins but God only?" But Jesus read their hearts without hearing their words, which also shows his omniscience, and said: "Why reason ye these things in your hearts? Which is easier to do? to say to the sick of the palsy, Thy sins be forgiven thee; or, Arise, and take up thy bed and walk?" Then Jesus appealed to the act of his power to show his Divinity. If he could say, "Arise, and take up thy bed, and go thy way into thy house," and the palsied man obeyed, by a disappearance of his disease, it was evident that Jesus could say, "Thy sins be forgiven thee." So far as Jesus was concerned, it was only a choice of phraseology when he said, "Thy sins be forgiven." He could have at first said, "Be healed of thine infirmity," and the disease would have gone. But Jesus was in the world primarily to save men by forgiving their sins, and he kept such work ever before their eyes in all his acts and words.

He did say to the man, "Arise, and take up thy bed and go into thy house; and immediately he arose and took up the bed, and went forth before them all." This act of the man was very convincing, and could not be questioned as coming from the words and power of Jesus, for he began to act immediately upon the ordering of Jesus. The act of Jesus in healing, and of the man healed, was done openly before the eyes of all in the room and about the door, and created great astonishment among the people, and caused some to glorify God, saying, "We never saw it on this fashion," "We have seen strange things to-day."

## SECTION B.—JESUS CALLS MATTHEW.

Matt. ix, 9; Mark ii, 13, 14; Luke v, 27-32.

Jesus is still in Capernaum on the third visit he made, and on the second visit after he had chosen it for his home. Section A furnished an account of his curing a paralytic in a certain house; and Matthew would have us believe that Jesus left that house and went out to the shore of the sea, and coming to the custom-house of the Romans and seeing Matthew or Levi collecting taxes, called him to become a disciple. It must not be forgotten that the Jews at this time were a subjugated people, and were taxed by the Romans, who had conquered them in war. They had quite a government at Capernaum at this time, and a large number of officials, civil and military. An important class of officials of Rome was the tax collectors, commonly called publicans. These officers were the class to which Levi belonged. They were hated by the Jews, being accused of a great deal of extortion in their official duties. No man or occupation was looked upon with such abhorrence as the tax collectors. The calling of such a one by Jesus to become a teacher and leader in his kingdom in the world was something that men could not understand. The outright enemies of Jesus knew not how to take such an act other than to claim that Jesus was in conjunction with wickedness, that he was in league in some way, after all, with the wicked one. And the friends of Jesus could not explain such an act, inasmuch as Jesus was the Messiah who was to bring redemption into the world and save from error. Neither had the enemies or friends of Jesus learned that his work would reach men, both internally and externally, to prepare them for the new kingdom of God; that the Christian work would take hold of such men as Levi, and make them entirely new creatures, thus preparing them to take hold of the gospel and deliver it as "Israelites, in whom there is no guile."

But Jesus knew what he would, and what his grace could do; so he called Levi, as certainly he saw in him some special fitness to do the work of a true disciple. The call was doubtless of a Divine nature, for a man like Matthew would hardly leave so readily as he did if there was not some supernatural power to draw him from the haunt of a paying office. Luke says, "He left all," rose up, and followed him. Of course, this language must be interpreted in the light of common sense, which teaches that Levi did not the very moment follow off Jesus; but he took time to resign his post and honorably turn over all his business, as a man of honor and trust should and would do. But the willingness of Levi to hear, and with a single call follow Jesus, was very suggestive to us. First, that we should hear the voice of God's Son, and when once heard should follow his call. We note that Jesus said to Levi, "Follow me." He did not tell him to come as a disciple, and brave his difficulties alone, but assured him that he only sought him to follow him and learn to do as he did. The further lesson is, that Levi left all. There was nothing he clung to—not office nor its emoluments; not home, nor parents, nor family relatives.

After Levi had accepted the call of Jesus to become a disciple, he made a feast; and it was called a great feast because of the character of the guests and their number. It was a feast in honor of his heavenly Teacher, in which sat a great company of tax collectors, besides other special guests.

During the feast the scribes and Pharisees began to find fault, as usual, with Jesus. They said to his disciples, who were also invited to this sumptuous feast, "Why do ye eat and drink with publicans and sinners?" While they thus spoke as alone to the disciples, they meant to include and especially point out Jesus as being guilty also of this very distasteful act. Hence Jesus took up the matter thrown at his disciples, and said: "They that are whole need not a

physician; but they that are sick. I came not to call the righteous, but sinners to repentance." This language and its teaching are too plain to need comment. We know if a man is well he does not need the physician; and by this Jesus would say: "I am eating and drinking with these despicable publicans because they are spiritually sick of sin and they need me, and therefore I am here." He further gave them to understand that if he staid away from such characters he would fail to do what he came for; namely, to call sinners to repentance.

But here Jesus teaches us a great lesson, both by his words and example; namely, that if we would save men we must not be above their association or placing ourselves in a position to reach them. This is a work that Christendom is suffering for to-day. Too many are being lost on account of their fallen and depraved characters. Christians are quite far from their duty being done till they shall learn to go wherever man is found, and save mankind out of any kind and all sin. The drunkard, the prostitute, the gambler, and all other classes of sinners must be saved by Christian hands, if at all; and it is quite sure that the Christian can not do his work by letting sin rock along to its own conviction or by standing aloof. But these wicked scribes and Pharisees, being answered in a most masterful manner by the Savior regarding his eating and drinking with tax collectors, are not silent; but still plaintive and fault-finding. So to get up a fault anyway they referred to the custom of fasting by the disciples of John and of the Pharisees. They asked, "Why do the disciples of John and of the Pharisees fast, and thy disciples fast not, but eat and drink?" Jesus replied to them by asking another question. He asked, "Can ye make the children of the bride-chamber fast, while the bridegroom is with them?" This was not a custom, as those Pharisees knew. But Jesus continued: "The days will come when the bridegroom shall be taken away from them,



and then shall they fast in those days." By this last quotation Jesus predicted his death at the hands of that same Pharisaic party. He showed that his taking away would not be by natural forces. Then he declared that after his death it would be the time for his disciples to fast.

Jesus continued his conversation with a parable of the new cloth and old garment. He spoke what is daily experienced even now, that new cloth placed upon old makes a rent. And of the new wine and old bottles. The bottles referred to were skin bottles, which could not stand the strength of the fermentation of new wine. But why these parables? and what their teaching? Jesus meant to say to all those present, but especially his disciples, as well as his enemies, that it was a matter as wholly impracticable and impossible to apply to the unregenerate hearts of the Pharisees, and have them take and assimilate his new kingdom doctrine, as it was to put new cloth successfully upon an old garment, or new wine into old leathern bottles. Hence they could not and would not understand his doctrine, since their minds and hearts were like the old garments and skin-bottles. And to attempt to harmonize his doctrines with that of the Jewish Church as held by the Pharisees, would only prove rupture in each attempt, seeing their minds were old and set to tradition. On the other hand, his new doctrine had to be received and understood by hearts touched by the Spirit of regeneration. Then Jesus closed this discourse by speaking what is common experience; namely, that "No man having drunk old wine straightway desireth new: for he saith, The old is better." By which passage, Jesus would say the old doctrinal leaven of Judaism, imbibed for ages by the Jews, would be preferred to his new doctrine, which was so heavenly and holy that it could only meet with resistance by unconverted and benighted hearts.



## SECTION 6.—JESUS IN THE CORNFIELD.

Matt. xii, 1-8; Mark ii, 23-28; Luke vi, 1-5.

Jesus again left Capernaum and went out into the interior of Galilee. As he went, it was said to be on the Sabbath-day. Jesus may have been, if on the seventh day, trying to reach some town or village near Capernaum within a specified time, for Sabbath-day journeys were all limited. In passing, with his disciples, they went through a cornfield, in which the language of the present subject occurred between Jesus and the Pharisaic party over the disciples plucking and eating grain to break their fast.

This affair must have occurred near the city of Capernaum; yet nothing is certain of this topography except that it was in Galilee and about the time of barley and wheat harvests.

Just what kind of grain this was we do not know. It is safe to say it was not that grain which we call corn; for the disciples would not have rubbed it out in their hands to clean, and eaten it as they did. It was, without doubt, barley or wheat, which at this time matured and was ready to be thrashed by the hand for separation from the chaff.

It is said that this act was on the Sabbath; however, there must not be too much stress placed upon that phrase, in this connection, as surely meaning the seventh day; for Sabbath, after all, means rest, and may properly be applied to any cessation of labor, in a Jewish sense. Luke says, "It was on the second Sabbath after the first." But this is a very obscure expression; so much so, that the Revised Version leaves off the numeral adjectives and simply reads, "on a Sabbath," and not "the Sabbath," showing that this time, in probability, was simply some sacred rest-time being observed by the Jews. At any rate, some one might conclude, from the reproach of the Pharisees, that this was unquestionably the real Jewish Sabbath, or seventh day.

But we must keep in mind that the sacred days and festive occasions, especially the first and last feast-days, were days as sacredly observed, in the letter, as the real Sabbath, and that the fault-finding Pharisees would gladly and purposely complain of Jesus as quickly for any seeming violations of those days and times as those of the real Sabbath.

It is hardly probable that this was the real Sabbath; for we would not likely find Jesus *en route*, with all of his disciples, on his Father's holy day. If it were the real Sabbath, I think it was the only place we have Jesus mentioned *en route* on that day. I feel safe in saying the Sabbath, here, is not the seventh day of the week, but some other day of a sacred observance.

The disciples, with Jesus, had made an early start, and, after some journey and fatigue, hunger came upon them, as when they had reached Jacob's Well, and went into the town to buy bread.

There was no town near enough to relieve hunger as quickly as the grain, and so the disciples began to pluck the grain. And, before eating, they rubbed the grain out in their hands and ate. Then the Pharisees asked them, "Why do ye that which is not lawful to do on the Sabbath-days?" Jesus then came to the rescue of his disciples, and made their defense against these persecuting and hypocritical Pharisees, who, more than likely, had followed him out of Capernaum to pick some flaw and have a pretext for carrying out their deadly malice against him. Jesus asked them, "Have ye not read so much as this, what David did, when himself was an hungered, and they which were with him; how he went into the house of God, and did take and eat the showbread, and gave also to them that were with him; which it is not lawful to eat but for the priests alone?" These questions, which were unanswerable, silenced the inconsistent Pharisees, and justified, in a triumphant manner, his disciples. These Pharisees were readers and exemplars

of the Scriptures, and they held up David as their great king, and would condemn the disciples for doing nothing more than David and his men, who were justified, in taking from the sacred place the allowance of the priests. Jesus asked them, "How do you justify David and condemn my disciples? Can you read, and not, at some time in your life, have read this fact?" Then he again wound up his remarks by saying to them that he was Lord and Master of the Sabbath and all sacred times, and that, as such, it was his privilege to work always; and he justified his disciples, as were David and his men.

#### SECTION A.—JESUS CURES A WITHERED HAND.

\* Matt. xii, 9-14; Mark iii, 1-6 Luke vi, 6-11.

Jesus is still in Galilee, and, according to three of the sacred writers, is in one of the Galilean towns or villages. But no one of the writers tells us what village or town. We base our opinion of this topography being a town or village plot because there was a synagogue of the Jews. This time is the Sabbath, and 'it is perfectly natural that Jesus was found at the synagogue to join in religious worship and to teach. However, there is no special and formal work mentioned as being done by him except teaching on this day. He must have only attended this service as any other visitor. It does not seem that he was expected at all, and the lame man was only there as a visitor or worshiper. At any rate, Jesus was ever ready, willing, and able to heal, and sought opportunity ever to do good. And as this man saw the great Teacher and realized his condition, he, in some way, drew upon the tender mercies of Jesus to heal him.

His trouble was an afflicted hand, which the writers called "withered." We do not know what this affliction

was or its cause. It may be that a partial stroke of paralysis caused the shrinkage; but, whatever the cause and condition, it had maimed the man, and required supernatural power to restore it; hence, Jesus acted. If it could have been cured any other way Jesus would not have acted, and the hand ere this would have been restored. When the attention of Jesus had been drawn to this man by his own prayers, or by those of his friends, or by the voluntary knowledge of Jesus that he might put forth his glorious power there, there were the same old Satanic crew of the Pharisees to watch, accuse, and find fault. This crew of Satan watched Jesus to see would he heal this man of afflictions on the Sabbath-day. Of course, they were not careful about the Sabbath being honored; but this plea was a pretext to speak against Jesus. They only waited daily and ever for a chance to accuse and charge Jesus. They sought always this chance, both in religious and civil affairs. These Pharisees were so afraid that Jesus would heal the hand, and thus win believers and build his influence, that they proposed a Sabbath question in such a way as would deter him, if possible, or weaken his influence if he should restore the hand. Their question was, "Is it lawful to heal on the Sabbath-day?" But Jesus turned his attention to the cripple, and said, "Stand forth." Then he began to ask his enemies different questions. Matthew says he asked, "What man shall there be among you, that shall have one sheep, and if it fall into a pit on the Sabbath-day, will he not lay hold on it, and lift it out? How much then is a man better than a sheep!" Mark says he asked them the following questions: "Is it lawful to do good on the Sabbath-days, or to do evil? to save life or to kill?" Now, all these questions were asked, only they are differently reported. They were only asked by Jesus by way of answering the hypocritical question of the Pharisees, and to show to those present how incon-

sistent and deceitful the Pharisees were in their pretensions to holiness. His questions were to point them out as much more guilty than any one else; for they allowed and were continually doing worse things than those whom they accused. They would minister on the Sabbath-day to the distresses of a cow or sheep, and thought it wrong for Jesus to minister to the distresses of a man, so much more important than a sheep. No wonder that they were called hypocrites, straining out gnats and swallowing camels. At any rate, when Jesus proposed his questions of sheep and of saving and destroying life on the Sabbath, these Satanic emissaries only held their peace—better, their diabolism.

Then Jesus turned about his head, looking over the confounded wretches who were now exposed, silenced, and unable to answer or justify themselves, and grew angry toward them, being grieved for the hardness of their hearts. Then he said to the lame man, "Stretch forth thine hand." This man then obeyed; and this is the secret of all success in God's service—obedience. No man can be blessed of God unless he has faith and obedience. And because he did obey, and doubted not, his hand was restored whole, or as perfectly as the other.

What a meeting was this to him! He came withered and painful, but returned whole and sound. He could never forget that day and occasion. He could never forget that lovely countenance of Jesus. He could always hear, ringing in his ears, those majestic utterances, "Stand forth! Stretch forth!" and their sequences.

But after Jesus had so mercifully healed the man and justified the act, yet his Pharasaic enemies were not satisfied, but grew wretched, even desperate, and at once went out of the synagogue and formed a conspiracy with the Herodians to murder Jesus.

But who were these Herodians that formed an alliance to destroy Jesus? The Herodians were a political party,

and not a religious sect, as the Pharisees, Sadducees, and Essenes. They were the partisans of the Idumean dynasty, which, springing from heathenism, remained, in taste, inclination, barbarity, and licentiousness, heathen still, though from State policy they outwardly conformed to the Jewish ritual observances. Supported in authority and position solely by Roman might, they endeavored to repay their benefactors by performing their part of the compact in leavening the Jewish nation with laxity of moral tone, religious indifferentism, and the policy of temporizing under Roman ascendancy. Hence, they vied with the Sadducees in skepticism, the Greeks in licentiousness, pandered to the Herods' vice and cruelty, and truckled to the Romans. There can be no surprise that such a set of men would join the ruling class of the Jews to put a Nazarene Prophet to death.

#### SECTION 7.—JESUS RETURNS TO THE SEA OF GALILEE.

Matt. xii, 15-21; Mark iii, 7-12.

When Jesus cured the withered hand in a Galilean synagogue, and put his enemies, the Pharisees, to such an open shame before the people, they went about to kill him. And when Jesus heard of their conspiracy with the Herodians, he decided that he would no longer push on into deeper Judaism, but return in the jurisdiction of Herod Antipas, and he reached the Sea of Galilee. This return visit of Jesus was not uneventful, nor was it free from much public notice. Matthew tells us, "Great multitudes followed him," and Mark says these were from "Galilee, Judea, Jerusalem, Idumea, and from beyond Jordan; also, they of Tyre and Sidon, having heard the great things he did." These people were suffering, many of them, with various maladies—some with diseases of



various kinds, and some with demons. They, of course, sought many things of Jesus: some, to be healed, and some to hear his doctrine, as they were perishing for the truth; and some through force of curiosity and to accuse him. And Jesus did not fail, in some way, to satisfy all those who followed. The sick were healed of all their diseases; devils were cast out; the souls of the hungry were fed; and Jesus did and said so many things of truth that his enemies had plenty to stuff and enrage them. They were especially displeased to see that, at a touch of the hands of Jesus, or of his clothes, plagues vanished and unclean spirits fell down before him, and said, "Thou art the Son of God"—the very thing his enemies denied and did not want said.

Jesus charged the devils, or unclean spirits, and the healed people not to make him known; for to make him known would be but to increase his popularity, to impede his progress, to create a desire in the people to force him into secular life, and to hasten his end before his work should be done. He wanted to go on, for he was then fulfilling a prophecy uttered by Isaiah; namely, "Behold my Servant, whom I have chosen; my Beloved, in whom my soul is well pleased: I will put my Spirit upon him, and he shall show judgment to the Gentiles. He shall not strive, nor cry; neither shall any man hear his voice in the streets. A bruised reed shall he not break, and smoking flax shall he not quench, till he send forth judgment unto victory. And in his name shall the Gentiles trust." When Jesus reached the sea the crowds had become so numerous and pressed him so mightily that he requested his disciples to provide him with a small ship, that he might go out into the water, and thus avoid the throng. Thus ends his return to the sea and some of his most mighty works, which were so numerous that they go without minute description.

SECTION 8.—JESUS ABOUT CAPERNAUM RETIRES FOR PRAYER, AND CHOOSES HIS TWELVE APOSTLES.

Mark iii, 13-19; Luke vi, 12-16.

- We are still in summer, and Jesus has been spending some few days about the sea among great crowds of people, who followed him hither from parts mentioned in the previous section.

But Jesus was now about to enter upon one of the most important acts of his life; namely, the ordination of his twelve apostles. Some of these men had been following Jesus already more than a year; but Matthew only about three months; while others had not been formally called, or, if so, we have no mention of it. If not formally called to become a part of the twelve, Jesus selected them on this occasion to be a part of the twelve; and he ordained them with the rest. Of course, all of them believed on Jesus thoroughly as being the Messiah, and were prepared for the imposed ordination and apostleship. What they lacked in knowledge, there was the Savior to teach them till his death and ascension; and if they would go out to preach without the Master, some one of the older apostles could now accompany them as guides.

The reason this act of ordaining men to the apostleship was so grave was that it had such weighty responsibility, and was so far-reaching. Jesus was then laying the foundation-stones of a new kingdom and spiritual government, whose principles are righteousness and truth and holiness universally observed; a government which was to be just and equitable in every feature, regardless of race or nationality; and a government for the world throughout the duration of time.

These apostles had to be selected and ordained, with reference to their fitness for the stupendous work to be

begun for all time and eternity. Their fitness had to be natural and supernatural. The characters of this apostleship were very important. Men were needed who could always be depended upon to preach the gospel at any cost or sacrifice, and who would ever be true to their sacred trust—men of iron caliber and indomitable will; men to brave dangers and endure persecutions of all kinds for their Master's cause; men who, under the sword, at the stake, in the prison, in exile, in nakedness, in hunger and thirst, under good or bad report, in afflictions and bitterest ostracisms, would say, "None of these things move me from duty, successful or unsuccessful, encouraged or in despair." This was the kind of work Jesus was preparing for; and these the kind of characters needed. And the selection Jesus made showed great wisdom and guidance; for the entire band, except Judas, held up and died faithful and true. No mind but a Divine one could have made such a wise selection and ordained a more heroic band.

#### JESUS RETIRES FOR PRAYER.

Before Jesus selected and ordained the twelve disciples to be his apostles, he prayed over the matter very earnestly. His prayer for this great work and act of his was prolonged. Luke says, "He went out into a mountain to pray, and continued all night in prayer to God." This prolonged prayer was not in any part recorded. O, if we had it, what wisdom and strength it would give us! But since we have no part of it, we infer that it had, surely, two things for its object; namely—First, that his hands might be laid only upon suitable men for this apostleship; for this was the work of his humanity, and did not call forth supernatural wisdom any further than the Divine guiding hand of his Father; and

second, that prosperity and success from the accompanying hand of the Father might attend their labors henceforth in his name.

Jesus chose the mountain for this prayer and ordination. This place was a fortunate location, for it took them to a seclusion where Jesus could pray the night away without interruption, and speak at length before the ordination began. We do not know what range or peak of mountain this was. We are only sure it was about Capernaum. Luke says, "When it was day he called unto him his disciples." This language shows that Jesus spent the night alone. The men who thus far had followed him had done so as disciples or learners; but from this memorable day they were to be apostles. They thenceforth were to be intrusted with the tidings of truth, and sent out to do the biddings of the Master. The first of this band, in order, is Simon surnamed Peter; then Andrew his brother, James and John, Philip and Bartholomew, Matthew and Thomas, James the son of Alphaeus, and Simon called Zelotes, and Judas the brother of James, and Judas Iscariot. This is Luke's order. We can find here no higher and lower rank. The only thing said is that Jesus called and ordained these men; and they were all ordained—not excepting the traitor; but no one was placed above or below in rank. Hence, we learn here that the various orders of the ministerial ranks in the various Churches of Christendom are without Christian foundation when they lay claim to superior ordination. Ordinations may be to do certain things in any given Church, and to certain offices; but when it is once applied, granting fullness of ministerial prerogatives, then no higher ordination can take place.

When the papists come in here for a higher share of order, and seek such for popes and cardinals in the Apostle Peter, they certainly do not find it.

SECTION 9.—JESUS PREACHES IN THE MOUNTAIN PLAIN  
OF GENNESARET NEAR CAPERNAUM.

Matt. v, vi, vii, and viii, 1; Luke vi, 17-49.

We were last with Jesus on some unnamed mountain near Capernaum, where he chose and ordained twelve disciples whom he called apostles. But Jesus is not upon that mountain now; at least he is not there in the same capacity and place; for now he is on a mountain plain called Gennesaret; and he is surrounded by the thousands who followed him from Galilee and other parts on his return to the sea.

These anxious thousands were still following him to obtain relief from burdens of many kinds. Some had various bodily diseases, and others were possessed of devils and unclean spirits. Jesus was still healing and casting out devils. But Jesus was not only in this world to give men bodily ease and knowledge, but spiritual relief from the burdens of sin as well; so he sat upon a rise, or elevated spot, and began and preached the greatest sermon of all times, called the "Sermon on the Mount."

This sermon was reported by both Matthew and Luke. But because they report quite differently, and one gives some things the other does not, some try to say there were two sermons instead of one; but there was no ground for such conclusion. All that was needed to harmonize the different reports was to remember: First, two different men reported it, and they were not thinking of any collusion at the time; and the time they wrote was quite remote from the time the sermon was delivered, and memory could in some respect fail. Second, the essentials are principally the same, and do not vary greater than other narrations and utterances of the two men. Third, the journeys and works of Jesus, as reported by the two men, agree in showing the two reports to be the same sermon.

The sermon began as follows: Jesus decided to preach, and he betook himself to an elevation, to be used as a pulpit. It gave him prominence, and an advantage to make himself heard. He sat down, as most speakers and teachers of the East did, and first began to speak to his disciples; and before he had advanced in his sermon the eager thousands hung on his lips to catch the new and wholesome doctrine he was uttering and about to utter. Jesus knew just how to get the eager attention of the thousands who had come from every quarter, and many over great distances, to hear him. It must not be forgotten that the world was in a sad state at the coming of Jesus, who came in the fullness of time, and to fulfill a long expectation of peace, restitution, and deliverance.

Satan had ruined and cursed the world morally by sin, which he had wrought both into men's bodies and souls in the form of diseases and all kinds of demons. And the demons had so wrought upon men's bodies that they had taken control of their bodily members, driven them out of society, convulsed and dethroned their reason. And afflictions of maim, blindness, deafness, dumbness, and diseases of palsy, leprosy, and of all other descriptions, were continually preying upon poor, helpless humanity. Moreover, the Jewish nation was subjugated, and their only hope of retrieving their national independence was their expected Messiah. Quite every nation, at this time, was desperate and despondent, and in the same state of the Jews; for proud Rome, through her seven hundred years of war, had conquered all the nations; so it could be said to tax the world; for the Roman empire was the world, and the world was the Roman empire. Hence, it can be seen how these different regions and nationalities came to Jesus, and why they came. They wanted relief of bodily pain, of tormenting devils, of minds of anguish, and of political burdens and foes. Wherefore, to get their atten-



tion and well instruct them, Jesus began, in his very first utterance, to speak of the happy man; for the word we translate "blessed" is more truly and classically translated "happy." Now, when Jesus began to talk of the happy man, the thousands of unhappy creatures, who were full of unhappy things, listened to his words with rapt attention.

They were the more anxious to hear Jesus, because they looked for happiness in him, and since they had tried all the schools and philosophies of the world, and only found them vain shadows. Also, the religious instructions were only child-play and forceless; and Pharisaic tradition, instead of rendering men less burdensome and happy, only increased their toil to observe it; and it kept their hearts ever under the lash of condemnation.

Jesus, however, began to speak, not of the kind of happiness they wanted; for they were only seeking worldly happiness for their bodies. Jesus, it is true, spoke of this kind, but more. He spoke of the true happiness and the real joy.

Anyway, we see Jesus began, and got attention. And as he preached the greatest sermon of the ages, we will examine it methodically.

#### VERSES 1-12 THE HAPPY CLASSES.

Verse 3.—Jesus said, "Happy are the poor in spirit: for theirs is the kingdom of heaven."

Jesus here began to call attention, first, to the real need and the true need of men in order to be or become happy. That need is poverty of spirit. No soul can get the true and enduring happiness who feels that he is full and wants nothing. God can not bestow happiness upon any man, or multitude, Jesus would say, if that man or people do not feel a need of it. But Jesus would say to them, This happiness is in the fact that the poor have the kingdom of

heaven. O, how amazing is grace! Here poverty becomes wealth—it promises a kingdom, and it is the kingdom of heaven. This is no failing and conquerable kingdom; for its King is Lord of lords and King of kings. It is not subject to plundering; for no thief can break through and steal its goods, and moth and rust can not corrupt. The poor in spirit get this kingdom and its treasures for nothing.

“In my hand no price I bring,  
Simply to thy cross I cling.”

All its King asks is that sinful self be renounced. Is it not true, then, that the poor in spirit, or those who feel the need of godliness, are happy?

Verse 4.—Jesus said, “Happy are they that mourn: for they shall be comforted.”

Here Jesus is still teaching them the spiritual principles, and he would urge them to mourn over their spiritual losses, of which they have so long been deprived. And this deprivation has robbed them of their happiness by driving away God, the only true Source of happiness. That they had sinned, and their sins separated them from God, their happiness; and the only way to rid themselves of sin and be restored to God was to mourn the loss of God and break off sin by repentance. Then he assured them that, if they repented and mourned over their past losses and transgressions, God would be propitious—“they should be comforted.” And the comfort should not be only promissory, but forthcoming, and truly relieving both mind and body, and enduring through eternal life.

But here is another gem of joy—it is comfort. How many have it? How many know anything about it? It does not come by man; for man has it not to give. It does not come through wealth; for money can not buy it. It is not the gift of wisdom; for wisdom itself needs it. It is not the gift of friends; for friends are dying daily

for it. It is not of any earthly source; it is not to be found without going to God through Jesus. But will he give it? He says, "The Lord is nigh unto them that are of a broken heart; and saveth such as be of a contrite spirit."

Verse 5.—Jesus said, "Happy are the meek: for they shall inherit the earth."

Jesus first spoke of the poor in spirit, and secondly, of those that mourn, and showed why they shall be happy. He now calls the attention of his hearers to the fact that not only are his followers to realize lives of spiritual poverty and go mourning on account of sin and spiritual losses, but there is a bright side to the Christian life as its reward in the present time, and that bright side of rewards is the enjoyment of worldly possessions that now are. Jesus teaches that the principles of the Christian life are to beget in men the characteristic of gentleness, seasoned and tempered with godliness, which, by virtue of its own merit, has and holds the earth, with all of its fullness, and deals it out to all obedient and faithful servants. He teaches that gentleness is a characteristic of grace, a dowry of heaven, and it has such approval of the Father in Heaven that he promises it the heritage of the earth. He teaches that gentleness is more admirable and desirable than the spirit of worldly heroism that taketh a city and spreads human blood from shore to shore. The reward of gentleness is without anguish or vile condemnation. It is an inheritance that giveth peace and joy.

Jesus teaches that, while the Christian life demands and urges self-denial, poverty of spirit, and mourning, nevertheless it offers better than it takes. It takes the bad of earth away, and offers the good; for poverty, it brings wealth; for sickness, health; for confusion, peace; for darkness, light; and for error, the eternal truth.

Indeed, godliness has the promise of the life that now is, and of that which is to come.

The meek are the Christlike at heart. Jesus was the Lamb of God whose voice was not heard in the streets; whose hand would not break the bruised reed nor quench the smoking flax. "He was in the form of God, and thought it not robbery to be equal with God: but made himself of no reputation, and took upon him the form of a servant, and was made in the likeness of men: and being found in fashion as a man, he humbled himself, and became obedient unto death, even the death of the cross." (Phil. ii, 6-8.) Jesus is thus laid down as a pattern of meekness and humility, whose footsteps his people are to follow with this promise, "They shall inherit the earth." They shall inherit it here and hereafter. They shall inherit it because it is their Lord and Master's. It is his by creation and redemption. It is his by the promise of the Father, who hath given him the earth and its ills as his inheritance. Jesus once said to Peter and others concerning this spirit of gentleness and its rewards, "Verily I say unto you, There is no man that hath left house, or brethren, or sisters, or father, or mother, or wife, or children, or lands, for my sake, and the gospel's; but he shall receive a hundred-fold now in this time, houses, and brethren, and sisters, and mothers, and children, and lands, with persecutions; and in the world to come, eternal life."

Verse 6.—Jesus said, "Happy are they which do hunger and thirst after righteousness: for they shall be filled."

Jesus, after speaking of material and bodily enjoyments which are promised the Christian-like characters, returned to the spiritual needs of the soul-hunger and thirst for righteousness. So important was this need of the soul-righteousness, that Jesus set it forth in the two words that name the greatest needs of the body to be looked after—hunger and thirst. Hunger and thirst provided for, the body lives and enjoys its existence; while, if unlooked for, the body famishes and dies. Thus Jesus emphasized this

grace of righteousness when he put it forth as something to be thought of, sought, longed and thirsted for. It was that without which the soul can not live, but must perish. It was the soul's meat and drink, and as the body longs for drink and bread, so does and must the soul. Righteousness is meat, drink, and dress. Righteousness is the basis upon which it stands, the soil it must cultivate, and the harvest it must reap. Righteousness is of God, and the soul that eats and drinks it in daily imbibes and assimilates so much of God, and the more it grows, daily, like him. The man who longs after righteousness becomes stronger, and, eventually, develops; for the soul is not longing in vain; but the promise of Jesus is, "It shall be filled." To be filled is to be grown, and this growth partakes of the nature of satisfaction. This satisfaction is a grace; for it is the gift of God and comes only to those like him. This satisfaction pacifies the bosoms and throbbing hearts of men when the world is arrayed against them for some righteous action or words. "There is therefore now no condemnation to them which are in Christ Jesus, who walk not after the flesh, but after the Spirit." (Romans viii, 1.)

The satisfaction comes because God has promised it—"They shall be filled." There shall be, therefore, no disappointment and looking in vain for the soul's desire of righteousness; for righteousness allies it with God, who holds and possesses all things to give.

The soul shall be filled here and hereafter. It shall be filled here, for it shall learn what is that good and perfect will of God, and shall delight in doing it because it shall be filled with righteousness. It shall be filled, because God's hand shall never tire or fail in bestowing the things sought, asked, and needed to make the soul fully conscious of a life of entire godliness.

But the things of the present life are not sufficient in themselves completely to fill and satisfy the soul; so the

things to come must take and shall take a part in this fullness. Thus, when the soul shall return to God, who gave it, and the body to the dust to sleep, and Christ shall return to awake and reward it, then it shall enter upon that life of unwasting fullness. It shall reap the eternal weight of glory to be revealed in us. It shall be like him.

Verse 7.—Jesus said, “Happy are the merciful: for they shall obtain mercy.”

Jesus here announces the very cause of his mission into the world and the chief foundation-stone of his spiritual kingdom—mercy. Had it not been for this principle of his heart, he never would have been found in the flesh to save a world of helplessly ruined sinners; and, inasmuch as he came through mercy to establish a kingdom of grace whose basis is mercy, he enjoined upon its subjects to be merciful, and declared that they shall, by showing mercy, obtain the same, first of him, and of others. No greater principle can be laid down than that of mercy; for it is the pity and sympathy of the heart which go out for the helpless and distressed. And a world which is full of sin always has its distresses, its woes, its necessities, which are, in some, to be looked after by others; hence, this verse enjoins the duty of mercy. And this law of mercy is, in its operations, a work for all and in which all may engage. If one is poor or rich, there is some duty in this wise to perform. The most ignorant can show mercy as well as the learned, and none, of a Christian heart, is or can be exempt when there is a call to such a task. There will never come a time when mercy will not be needed in this life of sin. Mercy for those whose lives are to be saved from sin, because they can not save themselves; not from vice, not from error, not from ignorance of God, and in no respect. Mercy for the sorrowing whose hearts are painful, breaking, and whose eyes are moistened by the tears of bereavement, trials, and a thousand unspeakable



afflictions. Mercy while hunger, and thirst, and nakedness, and widowhood, and orphanage, and sickness, and imprisonment, and mortality, and grief, and bloodshed, and burdens, and disappointments, and years, and months, and days, and hours shall exist. And the man who shows mercy shall obtain mercy; wherefore, the merciful are happy. And every man needs to show mercy to-day; for to-morrow some adversity is sure to overtake him. And this adversity may be a huge angel that may sweep away in an hour, by the flames or floods, his millions or his health; his livelihood or his good name; his friends or all the props of his life, and leave him alone, in the midst of life's billows, to perish and die.

The truly happy man is he who gives hoping not to receive back; who gives because he has it and suffering humanity needs it. He is happy that he can relieve the suffering and succor the faint; but his happiness, also, comes from God as well; for he saith, "Blessed is he that considereth the poor: the Lord will deliver him in the time of trouble." (Ps. xli, 1.) "Also with the merciful, God will show himself merciful." (Ps. xviii, 25.) Indeed, the whole Bible teems with examples, precepts, and duties of mercy to be shown toward our fellow-man.

When the Master shall come in his glory with all the holy angels about him, he will say, "Come, ye blessed of my Father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world: for I was an hungered, and ye gave me meat: I was thirsty, and ye gave me drink: I was a stranger, and ye took me in: naked, and ye clothed me: I was sick, and ye visited me: I was in prison, and ye came unto me. Then shall the righteous [merciful] answer him, saying, Lord, when saw we thee an hungered, and fed thee? or thirsty, and gave thee drink? When saw we thee a stranger, and took thee in? or naked, and clothed thee? Or when saw we thee sick, or in prison, and came

unto thee? And the King shall answer and say unto them, Verily, I say unto you, Inasmuch as ye have done it unto one of the least of these my brethren, ye have done it unto me." (Matt. xxv, 35-40.)

Verse 8.—Jesus said, "Happy are the pure in heart: for they shall see God."

Here Jesus takes up the underlying principle which is the very essence and characterizing feature of his kingdom and the burden of his doctrine. It is purity; and this purity is of the hearts of his people, and is to come out in all their faith, actions, and words. Their religion must be pure and unalloyed with any other religion. Jesus clings to the first commandment, which says, "Thou shalt have no other gods before or besides me." Their religion, he taught, was to be a service and homage to the one living and only true God; for, besides him, there was none other under heaven. He teaches, in other words, that no man can serve two masters; none can serve God and Mammon or Belial. The hour man introduces the service of any other god he pollutes his own soul and debases his own nature, thus taking away that happiness of a righteous service. Jesus teaches that the actions and dealings of his people with other people must be partaking of hearts of purity, and their works must be pure and just. No act of adulterated dealing will in any wise bear his approval or carry his smile. The only act tolerated by him will be that of the Golden Rule, "Do unto others as you would have them do unto you." Any action further than this loses its purity, and becomes impure. Also, man's words are to be in the bounds of purity, free from falsehood, from blasphemy, and from any force that is not becoming chastity. And all the issues of life must proceed forth pure, and will be pure if the heart is pure. If the heart is not pure, the issues of life can not be pure; for, "As a man thinketh in his heart, so is he." And this organ must

be kept pure, since out of it are the issues of life. It is God's throne in man, and that which he asks and claims. And if the heart is not given him, he can not enter the life as its Savior and Guide. But the real happiness is not alone in righteous living and freedom from condemnation in dealing and speaking, but, more abundantly, in the fact that one shall see God. Thus it is no wonder that the psalmist prayed, "Create in me a clean heart, O God, and renew a right spirit within me;" for this heart shall enjoy God by faith in this life, which is heaven below, and shall see him as he is hereafter, which is heaven above.

The pure in heart shall see God because God delights in and will take up his abode with them. For them Jesus has prepared a place because they have followed him in the regeneration, and because in their hearts of purity they delight in his law and keep his commandments of righteousness. They shall see him hereafter in his blissful abode among his saints and angels. They shall see him in his glory, royalty, and perfect character. They shall see him throughout eternity, to enjoy his love and feast upon his wisdom of perfect knowledge. They shall see him to taste his immortal life; and they shall die no more, nor suffer pain, sickness, nor want. They shall be full, and no more want nor feel the need of any good thing; and they will ever delight more and more in their earthly hearts of purity, since such shall have brought unto them the joys that know no end.

Verse 9.—Jesus said, "Happy are the peacemakers: for they shall be called the children of God."

Following the pure in heart, Jesus, in Christian order, names the peacemakers. This class shall be called the children of God, because peace is of God, and whosoever loveth peace, loveth, to a great extent, godliness. The kingdom of God in earth is a kingdom of peace. Its Founder, Jesus Christ, is the Prince of peace, and the

first carols of angelic voices rang out to the Bethlehem shepherds, "Peace on earth, and good will toward men," at the birth and coming of Him who was to build a peaceful kingdom. Peace was to characterize this Christian kingdom, and mark it out, by this feature, from all others. How disappointed were those who looked for Jesus to build an earthly kingdom and rule the nations by violence when he came to rule by the law of love in a spiritual kingdom! How disappointed to find that Jesus gave no countenance to strife and confusion, in neither individuals nor in nations! How new was his teaching, that his followers must be the society of peace—peace in character and disposition; and this peace must control their lives and help them to control, for good, the lives of others! He teaches that it devolves upon all his followers to labor that all disunion, discord, and variances shall cease in the earth among men, and to reunite all separate agencies which have been disjoined by sin. This labor of making peace is to bring together the offending and the offended. Where there are enemies, they must be made friends by efforts put forth without reserve. The sinner must be reconciled to God. Every opportunity must be sought to introduce reconciliation between God and man and between man and man. Every form of confusion arising out of words or deeds must be checked, if possible, by the children of the kingdom. The kingdom of the Lord must spread and come to a consummate head by the pure agency of peace. There must at no time and place be used violence, the sword, or any other agency than that of peaceful conquest. Peace is the war implement of the Christian soldier, his badge and the dress of his order. Jesus, the Founder, came with the annunciation of peace and good will, and when he left his parting words were, "My peace I leave with you." But such as love and make peace and concord are happy, because they shall be called the children of God. They are

very properly named; for the children who break peace are the children of the devil. Those who make peace are the servants of God, and those who do his will or service shall know of his doctrine, since they are his children, receiving his confidential and Fatherly counsel.

They shall be called the children of God because there is no other name to call them by, since they serve God by peace-making. They shall be called the children of God because God shall dwell in their hearts, since he has no other hearts to dwell in. They shall be called the children of God because they are angels of peace, whose mission is to refill the earth with harmony. They shall be called the children of God, not only by men in earth, but by angels and the hosts of heaven. And they shall be the children of God; for they are the called, and whom he calls he will assuredly glorify.

Verse 10.—Jesus said, “Happy are they which are persecuted for righteousness’ sake: for theirs is the kingdom of heaven.”

There is no one of the Beatitudes more paradoxical than this one—that the persecuted for righteousness’ sake are happy. How can this be? is the cry of the human heart in its natural and unregenerate state; but this is not so great a puzzle to the spiritually enlightened. Those who belong to Christ are partakers of his sufferings, and when, for righteousness’ sake, they are called on to suffer, as imitators of their Lord, their sufferings are rather joyous, causing happiness instead of sorrow.

They have joy, because they are able to suffer for their Master’s sake and because they are suffering for righteousness. There is in every man’s bosom an expressed or repressed joy if he is suffering for doing right and his conscience is void of offense. Truly, there is something cheering in the suffering and persecution when the suffering is causeless, except only for speaking the truth, doing the



right thing, and sticking to a pure motive. But what gives most happiness to the persecuted is that they are suffering it for others' welfare and for the cause of Jesus. Hence, the cause is not theirs, and the work of persecution is the result of a brotherly and fellow feeling. When men are thus suffering, "labor is rest and pain is sweet;" for God is in them. They find that prisons prove palaces, and they are willing to endure sorrows of deprivation, peril, sword, nakedness, distresses, and whatever may come. And the greater the storm of trial, the happier they grow.

But another source of Christian happiness in trial is that persecutions for righteousness are not unexpected; for Jesus said he came to bring a sword, and a man's foes shall be they of his own household—the daughter against her mother, and the daughter-in-law against her mother-in-law, and the son against his father. This, however, would grow out of some being for righteousness and others for unrighteousness.

Persecutions, then, will abound while there remain both sin and righteousness, and not only will persecutions abound, but they will exist in all possible ways—persecution to death, as recently in Armenia, in Cuba, and as is going on in all unchristian lands against Christian missionaries. But not only out of Christian lands, but in Christian lands, where the right is arrayed against the wrong and the wrong against the right. How much wrong—who can tell?—was there in the institution of human slavery? Who can tell how many suffered because they spoke against the infernal institution? How many John Browns died, and how many Lincolns, because they dared to lift their voices against it and express their opinions and fiats on paper?

This Christian happiness comes, again, from the great fact that those who endure suffering wrongfully shall have therefor the kingdom of heaven. This kingdom is, below,



in the reign of righteousness; and above, in the fullness of that joy which comes as a fruit of righteous labor. The righteous shall have and own the kingdom below; for their Lord has promised it to them, and he is going on ahead of them in battle to conquer their opposers and gain the victory for his soldiers. He goes ahead, saying to his people, "Fear not, little flock, it is your Father's good pleasure to give you the kingdom." Hence, the expectation of a kingdom here and hereafter is a constant impetus to work on and a source that gives happiness unspeakable and full of glory. Under such inspiration, there is no wonder that Paul could write of imprisonment, peril, nakedness, hunger, thirst, and death as light afflictions which are but for a moment.

Verse 11.—"Happy are ye, when men shall revile you, and shall say all manner of evil against you falsely, for my sake."

This Beatitude is really an elaboration of the one of the previous verse. Then Jesus spoke of persecution in general, for righteousness' sake. Now he speaks of persecutions and other attendant evils for his sake. Jesus teaches, then, that persecutions will meet, first, the righteousness which he came to establish, and those who follow his tread will be the objects of it. Since, then, they have this much fixed in their minds, he adds, "Blessed are ye when men shall revile you, and persecute you, and shall say all manner of evil against you falsely, for my sake." Here we have their trial specified: first, revilings, or the contemptuous and opprobrious language which their enemies would use to reproach them; second, persecution, as above; and third, all manner of evil communications of a false nature. Then Jesus closes these Beatitudes, and especially the last two, with a grand injunction. He says, "Rejoice and be exceeding glad." Then he tells his reason for such an injunction. It is that they had a great reward

in heaven. He then calls attention to the fact that suffering should not be new to them, as though some strange thing had happened; for they knew, or might know, that the prophets, for righteousness' sake, were persecuted before them.

#### VERSES 3-16. HIS DISCIPLES ARE SALT AND LIGHTS.

Jesus now calls the attention of his disciples, by use of figurative language, to their spiritual duties. He, shortly before this, had called them fishers of men; now he calls them the salt of the earth and the light of the world. This language, in familiar speech, is to suggest to them their duty and work in the world. He has spoken of the happy classes; but these were all to become so by certain spiritual principles; yet these principles were to be inculcated by those who had learned of him. This was to be their work. Jesus taught his disciples, whom he had ordained, and all who believe on his name, that they must act, in the earth and in the world, as its salt and light. They were familiar with the use and beneficence of salt. They knew it was used to purify, to preserve, to aid in digesting, and to season their food. Then Jesus would say, This is your duty to the whole earth, which is foul with sin, its ruin; which is corrupt and decaying through wickedness, and can only be restored and made virtuous through your saving influence of grace. Jesus then called attention to the kinds of salt; namely, the savory and the insipid. He says the latter is good for nothing but to be cast out and to be trodden under foot of men. By this language he would urge his disciples and followers to be true to God, pure of heart, true to duty, and never let their Christian characters grow useless and their usefulness be gainsaid by the worldly-minded, because the moment they gave the world a chance to speak against their faith and devotion to duty, or any shortcomings in labor

or misconduct as teachers or workers of righteousness, then it would be impossible to win the world to the Christian cause; for they will be as salt without its savor.

But Jesus advances with another figure, and says, "Ye are the light of the world." Let it be noted that the earth and world are both named—the one to be saved, the other enlightened. These disciples and all the people of God were to do more than preserve the earth through their Christian influence. They were and are to instruct and teach till every man, from the least to the greatest, shall know the Lord. Their knowledge of Jesus and his revealed will is to cause men to see as by the sun of day or the light of night. Jesus teaches that, if they were proper teachers and exemplars, they would be as conspicuous for spiritual knowledge as the city of a hill, which it is impossible to hide because on the hill. They would be required to keep their Christian doctrine and religious lives conspicuous, because these were like the candle out from under the bushel and giving light unto all in the room. Then Jesus urges an impressive injunction, that they let their lights shine, and that, not as the candle under a bushel, which can not be seen, though it burns, but so shine that men may see their good works. It is, then, not enough to have good works, Jesus teaches; but they must be seen, and if the good works are seen by men, then God in heaven will be glorified.

#### VERSES 17-20. ERRONEOUS OPINIONS OF JESUS.

There were, in the multitudes who followed Jesus and listened to his doctrines and this very sermon, those who got the idea that he was in the world to annul all legal restraints and moral forces. This was the libertine class, who stood ready to welcome such a course, and they were urged on by the traditionary Pharisees, that Jesus might appear an abrogator of law, and they might successfully oppose him.

In his delivery such a course may have been suggested to Jesus by some of the libertine class; or, Jesus may have heard these opinions of him whispered by some of his disciples, who also needed to be set right in this regard; or, it may be, Jesus read such thoughts in their hearts, and he hastens, in his third point, to correct such error. He says, to set himself right in this matter, "Think not that I am come to destroy the law, or the prophets: I am not come to destroy, but to fulfill." By this language Jesus takes away the basis for every vain hope of the libertine. He declares he came, not to destroy the law and prophets, but rather to make these more binding, even in spirit, and complete, as they were not, and could not be, till he came as their End for righteousness.

Then he declares that the law and the prophets shall be fulfilled, not only in part, but in whole; not even one of the smallest matters shall fail till heaven and earth shall pass away.

He then further shows that, not only was he come to fulfill the law himself, but was its Guardian, and would see to penalties inflicted for its violation or misinterpretation. He first notices the violator and false teacher, and says his penalty shall be the least in the kingdom of heaven. But this language is a mild way of saying what Jesus says in the twentieth verse, that such a teacher shall really not enter and find a place in the kingdom; for there is no place in God's glorious kingdom, below or above, for a violator of his law and a false interpreter of the Holy Scriptures. Then Jesus, secondly, notices that man who does honor and obey his Word, and teaches the same to the people. He says the same shall be called great in his kingdom. Such a one shall not only be called great by men, but by his Lord and the holy angels. Such a one really is great who is God's ambassador, and is representing the laws of the Author of the universe.

Jesus further calls their attention to the fact that his disciples must do more than teach the letter of the law; this is what the hypocritical Pharisees did, and left off the spirit and its legal observance. So he says, "Except your righteousness shall exceed the righteousness of the scribes and Pharisees, ye shall in no case enter into the kingdom of heaven."

#### ANCIENT TEACHINGS DISCUSSED.

##### (1) MURDER. (Verses 21-26.)

Jesus claimed in his third point, that he came to fulfill or perfect the law; so now, in his fourth point, he takes up the law, discusses its ancient teachings, shows its imperfections, and points out how it, in certain respects, becomes perfect through him. The first instance is murder. They had this law from Exodus xx, 13; and they (Jews) had added, by way of comment, "Whosoever shall kill shall be in danger of the judgment." This is all they said and taught to be their faith. They were persuaded that any soul that willfully perpetrated the act of taking life maliciously stands in danger of God's abiding judgments. But the entire stress of their teaching in this matter was placed upon the act. Accordingly no man was guilty of murder unless blood was maliciously spilt and life taken. But Jesus shows them that their teaching and law were defective, and fell far short of murder. He shows this by pointing out that murder is first and fully committed in a heart of anger toward men, when that anger reaches intentions of death. This anger also exposes to God's judgments as well as the murderous act. Therefore the perfect law prohibits anger as that which rests in the bosoms of fools, and rushes them on into rash words, and then come the council of men, and finally hell-fire. Jesus further enjoins that if one brings an offering to God, and before offering it remembers that there is some wrong between him and his brother whereby

they are unfriendly, he should leave the gift and go and seek, first, reconciliation, then come and offer it. Or come to God for service and acceptance when there is nothing between him and his neighbor. Jesus teaches that all differences must be settled in the very place where they occur. This will avoid a lingering cancer of thoughtful revenge, and stay the call for the magistrate, avoid the disgrace of the prison house, in which one shall be tormented to satisfy all demands of law.

### (2) ADULTERY. (Verses 27-30.)

The second ancient doctrine mentioned by Jesus is adultery. This law is also in Exodus xx, 14, and Deuteronomy v, 18. This law or commandment was also misinterpreted, and its sin was only in the act. And for the act certain penalties were inflicted. But Jesus finds adultery far even away from the act, and in the heart already committed, if there is lustful desire.

Jesus teaches that man has not only committed adultery when he has conveniently and successfully carried out the act, but when with real desire he looks upon woman. Then the desire is sin, as well as the act; and against the unlawful desire he must pray and contend. This contention and resistance must be persisted in, for the bodily lust must be mortified, though it be as necessary and useful as the right eye or right hand. Its indulgence will work sin, and when sin is finished it brings forth death and damnation. It is verily more profitable for man to enter life less the member of adulterous lust, than with it to enter hell-fire. But the same can be said of any and all the members.

### (3) DIVORCE. (Verses 31, 32.)

Jesus here speaks of divorce as an ancient teaching: at least it is in the class, and they had this law in Deuteronomy xxiv, 1. Let the reader read this law in Deuter-



onomy through several verses, and the weakness of the same will be evident. Yet it was a Mosaic law by which the people went and reaped licentiousness through its license. They made good and bad uses of it in its application to their lives. They had certainly abused its license much since Jesus here and elsewhere reproves them. In this place, however, he only refers to the law, and mentions what they had said by way of comment, and states his doctrine along by the side of theirs. They said, "Whosoever shall put away his wife, let him give her a writing of divorcement." This writing they taught was law, and therefore an absolving the real marriage, and this could be done for any desirable cause. But Jesus now teaches authoritatively and according to the original intention and law of marriage, and he declares that, without fornication, there is no ground for divorce, and that if divorce is secured for any cause except fornication, the man causes the woman to commit adultery, and the man who marries her commits the sin of adultery. As far then as Jesus expresses himself in words there is really in his teaching no ground for giving divorce and legal separation in Divine law, except infidelity of one party. This, however, is one of those passages which is hard to see through by men, since their hearts still demand divorce law, because they are hard. There is no passage in all the Scriptures against which men's hearts are so rebellious, and which they so reluctantly obey; no passage which they have written so much for and against, and concerning which they have so often legislated. We shall notice this subject again in our walk.

#### (4) OATHS. (Verses 33-37.)

The fourth in order of these ancient teachings is the oath. This law is variously found. (See Ex. xx, 7; Lev. xix, 12; Num. xxx, 2; and Deut. xxiii, 23.) The frequent use of the oath is brought out in the many mentions of it

in so many different books. The people of the Jews had carried the use of the oath to absurd wickedness before the coming of Jesus; hence he calls attention to its use and misuse. The Jews were accustomed to swear by many objects, such as heaven, Jerusalem, their own head, etc. Jesus here calls attention to such lax morality, and lays beside their law his law, which is, "Swear not at all: not by heaven; for that is God's throne: not by the earth; for that is God's footstool; not by Jerusalem; for that is the city of the great King [God.] Not by thy own head, since it is not thine to make a black or white hair." Now, in the first place, Jesus points out the folly of swearing by other objects, and especially those which do not belong to the swearer. To swear by the objects named was to make an impression that the one swearing was affirming a truth, while it often was the opposite thing—a lie, or only an equivocation. Whereupon Jesus enjoins, "Swear not at all; but let your communication be, Yea, yea; nay, nay;" or let your words be, Yes and No in all affirmations.

Jesus teaches that the much-abused oath will not make men more honest and upright because taken; therefore, it is useless. And what Jesus said nineteen hundred years ago regarding the ineffectiveness of the oath, men are finding to be the truth in law, social institutions, and in all the relations of life.

#### (5) RETALIATION. (Verses 38-42.)

The fifth in order of these ancient teachings mentioned by Jesus is retaliation. The Jews had this law in Exodus xxi, 24; Leviticus xxiv, 20; and Deuteronomy xix, 21.

Here Jesus calls attention to their ancient teaching and laws, and lays down by the side of these his teaching and law of human relation and action. The Jewish law might be called the law of vengeance, while the Christian is the law of love. The Jewish law required that whatever injury was

done one, that same injury should be returned upon the doer, as seen above. But the Christian law begins and operates differently. It says, "Resist not evil [or the evil person]; but whosoever shall smite thee on thy right cheek turn to him the other also. And if any man will sue thee at the law, and take away thy coat, let him have thy cloak also. And whosoever shall compel thee to go a mile, go with him twain." In these verses Jesus teaches sublimely, and as only God would or could teach. There is no humanity in this doctrine; it is all divinity. Jesus suffers not an iota of retaliation in his divine law of human action. Rather, he begins by saying, "Resist not evil;" that is, do n't start to stand up to oppose it; do n't enter any contest with it or its source. But whosoever smites thy right cheek, or some personal interest very dear and near, turn to him some other, rather than retaliate. It is better for the one suffering to give more latitude to the persecutor to do more evil than to resist and become equally as bad as the offender. The followers of Jesus must always act to be void of offense, and to exceed the worldly in righteousness; otherwise they fail to imitate and obey their Lord's commands. The Christian law must pervade the entire walks of man. This law must operate in Church, in State, in journeying, and in all the social relations. And whatever is done in the household of faith, must be done with an eye single to God and his glory; it must not be done to honor self or avenge selfish interests; otherwise the action will be retaliatory, and condemned in the sight of Jesus.

(6) LOVE AND HATRED. (Verses 43-48.)

The sixth ancient teaching given by Jesus is that of love and hatred. This law, or teaching, is found in Lev. xix, 18; xxiii, 6. As above, Jesus presents here the Jewish law regarding love and hatred for friends and enemies.

Now, the Jewish teaching was to love one's neighbor and hate his enemy. But the word we translate "neighbor" is, more properly translated, "friend." It is so used by the Savior when speaking of the man who fell among thieves, and of the actions of the priest, Levite, and Samaritan, and asked, "Who was his neighbor?"—that is, "friend." The word "neighbor," in a Jewish sense and use, meant only a Jew. No one was such, except Jews, but were enemies. But all Jews were not friends; hence the word is not to be used other than in an amicable sense; and to translate it "friend" meets the demands of the context. After Jesus sets forth their law, to love friends and hate enemies, he proclaims his law. It is, "Love your enemies," instead of hating them, as you have been taught. "Bless them that curse you," instead of returning vile maledictions. "Do good to them that hate you," instead of doing evil, as they were taught. "Pray for them that despitefully use you and persecute you." Then Jesus enjoins, "Do this, that ye may be like your Father in heaven, who sends his rains and sunshine upon both the just and the unjust."

Then he urges his followers to excel in righteousness, because if they did no more than love their friends, this is what the tax collectors did. To show the Christian influence, they must love beyond even the sinner who is an enemy. And this love and action toward mankind must not be superficial and only lip service, but in love and Christian dealings. They must be perfect, as the Father is perfect.

#### ALMS-DEEDS. (MATTHEW VI, 1-4.)

When Jesus finished correcting errors of himself and the ancient teachings, he had the minds of his disciples prepared to be instructed in the further observance of his laws. He enjoined various duties of good works prior to this. Now he adds how and in what spirit

to do their several deeds. He mentions, first, their deeds of alms and charity. Such deeds are Christian, and ought to be always observed, but should not be done simply to be seen of men. If so, God is not glorified. The followers of Jesus, in doing deeds of love, must never have any hypocritical feeling for self-esteem; because this is what the hypocrite does, and does it to be seen of men.

Their deeds must not be made known for self-consideration to their most intimate friends. All alms-deeds simply for Jesus' sake shall have his approval and reward openly. And when deeds are done in his spirit and for his glory, they have their reward from the Lord; otherwise they have only the perishable rewards of men. Jesus opens up here a remarkable feature of his new kingdom. It differs in the manner and spirit of alms-deeds from all other religions. It is humanity to do for show and worldly esteem; and, as all other systems of religion are man-made, they partake of the human disposition to do for to be seen. But Jesus said not, Do merciful acts, except for mercy's sake, and that good for the sufferer may be accomplished. O that the world would soon learn this Christian lesson, both to do and to love it! The world is full of poverty, suffering, and distress; and this condition is not because it is impossible to be otherwise; for there is uncounted wealth in men's hands, there are incalculable opportunities to relieve the world's burdened souls and hearts; yet these lie still for want of the real Christian spirit to put them forth for love's sake and humanity's relief.

PRAYER. (Verses 5-13.)

Jesus teaches his disciples to pray and do all their devotional service in the same spirit as he taught them to do their alms—that is, not for to be praised by men, but approved by their Heavenly Father. He points out the way of the hypocrites as loving to pray standing in public

places, for the express purpose of catching men's eyes, that men may speak of their piety; and this men do, for such prayers have their reward of men who only speak of religious piety, but do not know anything of the heart as to its intentions or how far it goes up to God. But the law of Jesus is to enter the closet, both of a secret place or in the secret meditations of the heart, and lift up the words and wishes of the heart to God only. Thus pray to the Father secretly and in secret for all needed help, and pour out all confession and acknowledgment of sin; and the Father of mercy, in secret, shall reward his people openly.

The second injunction of Jesus is to avoid vain or useless repetitions in prayer. This is what the heathens do, thinking that the many and repeated petitions will bring to them the ear of their gods. But his people shall be heard through the single petition; for their God is living and wise, and understands their wants, and knows their needs before they express them to him. And because he is so benevolent and kind, he is ever waiting and willing to give them what is needed.

But it is not enough for Jesus only to point out the manner of the hypocrites and heathen in religious service, but, as he disapproves their manner and minds of prayer, he must give his people a prayer, or at least a model. And this he does. This prayer, which follows here, known as the Lord's Prayer, is good enough for any devotion, private or public, but was not given to be the only prayer of his people, but rather as a model. Jesus had just ended his criticisms of the heathen prayers as containing many repetitions; so his prayer must remedy that defect, and, at the same time, cover all human need. But does it do this? We answer, Yes. There is no needed grace unasked and no wickedness unconfessed and its pardon unsought.



Its brevity is evident, and also its freedom from repetition. Let us examine it: (1) "Our Father which art in heaven." Here we have address and acknowledgment, first, that God is our Heavenly Father, and hence all his children are brethren; second, that he is in heaven, as his abode, but he is also in earth and everywhere.

(2) "Hallowed be thy name." This petition would ask that God's name be sanctified, consecrated, and revered. It recognizes the commandment, "Thou shalt not take the name of the Lord thy God in vain." Thus the very name of God, as well as his character, must be ever adored and guided by the lips of his people.

(3) "Thy kingdom come." The kingdom of God is universal righteousness in the earth, with all of its blessed results or fruits. Nothing less, nor more, is meant than the universal sway of the scepter of Jesus. It is the kingdom spoken of by Daniel vii, 14, and Isaiah ix, 7.

(4) "Thy will be done in earth as it is in heaven." This fourth petition is didactic as well as supplicative. It opens up the working of the saints and angels, and points out that there is no disobedience in heaven among them, but they all do the wishes and commandments of God. This fact points out the character of heaven as being a holy place, in which there is no sin to generate the evils of earth which cause its inhabitants to mourn. This petition also points out that the God of the universe is living and personal, and has will and laws; and it is for this will to be done, and these laws obeyed in earth as they are done in heaven, that this petition goes out.

(5) "Give us this day our daily bread." This petition recognizes man's utter helplessness and dependence upon God for bread; for man can not feed, water, nor clothe and house himself. He has no rising sun, no falling and refreshing dews nor rain, no power to make vegetation grow

nor to bring into existence the flesh on which he subsists. As to his own body, he can not add a cubit, nor make one hair white or black. Hence he prays wisely to the "Giver of every good and perfect gift," "Give us our daily bread to-day." He acknowledges his helplessness and poverty when he says, "Give us;" for alas! he has nothing to offer in trade or exchange to his God. This petition, however, must not be thought to cover only physical needs; but it also embraces spiritual succor, for which man must seek, and is equally as helpless to give himself.

(6) "And forgive us our debts as we forgive our debtors." This petition acknowledges sins in that it asks forgiveness of them. This petition owns not only sin, but sins, even all the debts of one's life, to be repented of. It also comes to God in the spirit Jesus previously commands in this same sermon—it comes, having forgiven its debtors before coming to God for his forgiveness.

(7) "And lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil." This petition is twofold: it has a negative and a positive wish. "Lead us not into temptation" is its negative wish. Here is a petition that God may not suffer one to be tried above his strength. Trials have always been beneficial to God's cause and to his people; and for this reason God has suffered them, and often, as in the case of Abraham, with his son Isaac as a sacrifice, brought them about himself.

It is well, however, to note here that the word "temptation" has nearly lost its original and proper meaning. It has now almost invariably a meaning which savors of sin and pollution, and in that sense would make God here the instigator to wrongdoing. But, as intimated above, the proper meaning is "trial," "test," etc.; for James i, 13, says, "Let no man say, when he is tempted, I am tempted of God; for God can not be tempted with evil, neither tempt-

eth he any man." Hence, if trial or test is considered as the proper meaning, everything harmonizes with the pure character of God, and the sense is made plausible. "Deliver us from evil" is the positive wish. It also helps out the meaning of the "Lead us not into temptation or trial." Deliver us from the sin which the trial might possibly bring; let it be a great or small trial.

We now have a model prayer, or one which we may use itself. There certainly is no reason that this prayer should not be used in private or in public devotion. I can see but one possible objection to its daily use, and that is, its frequent use and familiarity might do away with much of the real fervor and enthusiasm needed in prayer. Anyway, let it be a model for brevity, comprehensiveness, and lack of vain repetitions.

#### FORGIVENESS. (Verses 14, 15.)

We in this division have the sequel of the Lord's teaching on the subject of prayer. He taught his disciples that they must get right with their fellow-men before coming to him for pardon; also that they must pray, "Forgive us our debts as we forgive our debtors." Now he teaches the subject of forgiveness as a solemn injunction, and he says, "If ye forgive men their trespasses, your Heavenly Father will also forgive you;" then adds, to show the necessity of forgiveness as a Christian duty, "If ye forgive not men their trespasses, neither will God forgive you."

Jesus teaches here the real law of heaven and duty of man. The virtue of this Christian law is that it does not suffer man to be at peace with God, whom he has not seen, and is not in love and charity with his neighbor. How many are vainly deceiving themselves just here by going to God for pardon and grace, and at the same time they

themselves can not forgive their brother or sister. It is a high, inflexible Christian law, however, that such people will find no acceptance at a throne of grace till they themselves shall rise up in the true Spirit of Jesus, and be able to pray free from a spirit of non-forgiveness.

#### FASTING. (Verses 16-18.)

Among the many Christian means of grace taught to be observed by the Lord Jesus is that of fasting. This Jesus himself did in the beginning of his ministry, during forty days and nights, and frequently after this during his life; and he put much stress upon the act as a strengthening means of grace. Somehow a full stomach is not a wholesome basis for special Christian strength; but self-denial of food must be practised as much as any other abstinence for strength and labor. Fasting, as taught by Jesus, is abstaining from any and all food and drinks; if it does not reach thus far for a specified time it is not a fast. And the subject fasts to open up an avenue for the passage of the Holy Spirit into the heart with special grace and strength.

Jesus enjoins fasting, though not as essential to salvation, nor as a sacrament. He also lays down his rules and spirit with which it is to be carried out. He guards against the mode of the hypocritical Pharisees, who made their faces sad and disfigured just to appear to men to fast. They only fasted to get the praise of men, and not to honor God nor get any special grace. But Jesus said, "When thou fastest, anoint thy head"—a thing the hypocrites forbade; and "Wash thy face"—another act not allowed by the Jewish Pharisees; and they avoided any arrangement of toilet, to seem the more pious before men. But Jesus said, "Do n't put on any of this outward show to be seen of men; for God wants the true fast of the heart toward himself and for his sake."

And with this means of grace thus carried out his children will grow stronger and better, and will have the outward approval of their heavenly Father.

**TREASURES.** (Verses 19-23.)

Jesus, after perfecting the law of human action by his own law, and teaching his disciples sundry duties relative to man and to God, then called their minds to a right disposition of their treasures. He understood that men did have and would have treasures of various kind that would greatly influence their hearts and minds. Yea, that would control their very being. So he warns his followers to get and have treasures with God, laid up in heaven. He entreats that they do not lay up treasures upon earth. And he gives his wise reasons for not laying up treasures upon earth: First, because in earth, moth and rust corrupt, and thieves break through and steal them. Second, he gives his reasons for laying them up in heaven; they are, that thieves can not there break through and steal them, and moth and rust can not corrupt them. And his third reason given for thus acting with our treasures is, that they control our hearts, and lead after them our minds—"Where the treasures are, there is the heart also." How true is this statement experimentally! Men who are full of this world have no room for Jesus and heavenly things. Their hearts are full and their eyes are full. Therefore, Jesus urges that the eye be single, or untangled by the things both of earth and heaven. If the eye is upon only one object that is light in itself, then the whole body shall be full of light; but if the eye is upon an evil object, the body becomes full of evil or darkness; and if the professed light be darkened by evil influences, the darkness will be great. So it becomes every one to lay up treasures with God against the time of need and the day of judgment. Treasures with him will

be eternal and joyous. They will not be deceptive, promising life and giving death, promising happiness and giving sorrow, promising rest and giving toil. Yes, promising all things, and giving nothing that is abiding.

DUPLEX SERVICE. (Verses 24-34.)

Jesus has just taught his disciples to lay up treasures in heaven, and to have an eye alone to them. Now he continues on the same line of teaching, by declaring that a man can not serve two masters. This declaration is in human experience. We know that man can not obey two men at the same time, and give to both equal honor. Neither can man do more than one kind of work at a time; if he undertakes to do several things at once, his success to do any will fail. But Jesus, who deals only with the hearts and affections of men, declares that man can not serve two masters, for the reason that a double service will tend to provoke wrath; and he will love one and hate the other. However, there is an explanation of the terms "love" and "hate." It is, that he will love one much more, and the other much less, and not hate in the sense that we usually accept the word. Now what is true in human experience with man and his fellows, is true in respect to God and man; that no man can serve God and worldliness—here called mammon. Mammon is a word which means money or its equivalent, whatever is in the form of material worth. And Jesus teaches that if man is wholly absorbed in the act of amassing wealth, this only can he do; he can not serve both this and him.

He then comments upon his own word so that men might understand him. He would not have them believe he wished or taught them to give no attention to industry and frugality; rather he encouraged these; but what he wished to teach is, that man shall not give all his time and thought to worldly pursuits to get gain, which is perish-



able. Jesus would say, let not eating and drinking and raiment be your only concern. Life is more important than these; therefore let life's interests concern you most. Then to show that bodily needs should not be the absorbing concern of the man, Jesus refers to the fowls of the air and the lilies of the field, which are improvident; yet God feeds and adorns them surpassingly, because they are his creatures; and it is evident if he thus cares for lesser life in timely objects, that he will do so more abundantly for superior man, created in his image and likeness. Then Jesus refers to the prescience of the Father, who is always on the lookout for man's bodily needs, which removes the necessity for so doing in man. So he urges man, as the wisest and best thing to do, to seek the kingdom of God and his righteousness; and these assure all that the body needs. The folly, he says, of worrying about bodily needs of to-morrow is adding more evils to to-day; whereas, the evils of to-day are as many as man can bear; then take on no others.

JUDGMENT. (MATTHEW VII, 1-5.)

Jesus here admonishes his disciples to leave off judgments. But thus speaking, he certainly refers to judgments that were criminal, unjust, and harsh. He did not refer to a sober, just, and necessary judgment, whose labor is to do good. The human heart is liable to err; and it is equally as liable to judge others by itself. Then it is against that snap and harsh judgment that the erring heart will pass upon others for doing what it is more guilty of, that Jesus speaks, when he says, "Judge not." And the reason Jesus speaks against this judgment is, first, it is not justifiable; and, second, it is in turn to be used upon the judge. Man must not forget that in judging others he is judging himself, both among men and before God. "For with what judgment ye judge, ye shall be judged; and with what measure ye mete, it shall be measured to you again."

Now Jesus turns and asks on this line of judging, "Why do you look at the splinter in your brother's eye, but consider not the beam that is in your own eye?" This is unjust and harsh judgment thus to deal with your brother. Then Jesus continues, "How wilt thou say to thy brother, Let me pull out the splinter out of thine eye; and behold a beam is in thine own eye?" Now he teaches, "Thou hypocrite, first cast out the beam out of thine own eye; and then shalt thou see clearly to cast out the splinter out of thy brother's eye."

This comment of Jesus on unjust judgment is by interrogatories which are unanswerable and very suggestive. To us they say, "Be careful to not be guilty of what you harshly condemn in others." Rather than do this, it is better to do as the adulterous Pharisees did toward the woman whom they caught in the very act; take your feet and leave.

#### THE HOLY THINGS. (Verse 6.)

Jesus here evidently speaks especially to his apostles in reference to their ministerial duties. The thought may have been suggested by some complaint of offense taken from what Jesus had just said about judging, and showing up the folly of such judgment. The hypocritical Pharisees who ever indulged in such judgments, and set themselves up as guides in judgment for the people, would very naturally raise here an audible complaint and attract some attention of both the disciples and Jesus. But to their bickerings Jesus pays no attention, and thus teaches his disciples to take up no time in contentions with the obdurate and incorrigible classes; that is, if men will not accept the message of free salvation, but raise hostilities and enter contentions against their message, let them pass; for to do otherwise will be equivalent to casting that which is holy or is of wealth to the dogs, which will trample them under

their feet and turn and destroy you. By no means does Jesus mean to say men must be let alone in their wickedness; but that there is always an abundant harvest to be reaped of souls who will hear. Then go to those who will receive the words of life and save a thousand, where one through persistence will go to hell.

ASKING. (Verses 7-12.)

Jesus here turns to all his followers, and teaches them a religious duty to God. That duty is to ask one's needs and desires. And Jesus puts this duty forth in three terms, Ask, seek, knock. They cover all want and necessities. They each have a promise of response, and the promises of the Son are all to be filled by the Father for the sake of the Son.

But Jesus calls attention again to human kindness; he points out that a father who loves his son will not give him on request for bread a stone, or a serpent for a fish. This he will refuse to do, though man at his best is evil. Then if evil and frail man is thus kind to his heir, how much more kindness may we expect from God, who is infinite in grace and benevolence! We may surely expect, when we ask, to receive; when we seek, to find; when we knock, for the door of his wondrous kindness to be opened,—that it will fly back.

And Jesus teaches the law of universal love and equity; that "All things you would that man should do to you, do you even so to them; for this is the law and the prophets" summarized. This is the sequence of ask, seek, knock, and their comment. This law may be hard to keep, and men may decide that it really is impossible; but what may be found impossible to the human heart and hands is not with God, who will give all implied in ask, seek, and knock.

## THE STRAIT GATE. (Verses 13, 14.)

Jesus has just laid down the Golden Rule for human action. This difficult and just law might properly, with all of its requirements, be called a strait gate. Yet Jesus, who opens and establishes this gate, says to his followers, "enter" it. This is well said; for no one can be a good citizen, a good member of the Church, and a fit subject for the kingdom of God who does not enter this rule and live by it. It is the Christian law and rule of action which is to characterize and distinguish the followers of Jesus. This gate is thus marked off from the wide gate and broad way that lead to destruction. And many enter the wide gate and travel the broad way because there are no restrictions. But the strait gate though hard to enter, and the narrow way difficult to travel, yet lead into eternal life. It is far better, then, to labor now and rest hereafter; to endure hardships now, and be free from toil hereafter; to bear life's burdens of righteousness now, and reap the harvest of joyful plenitude hereafter. Let the battle of the Lord be fought to-day; for to-morrow will bring the victor's song:

"Sure I must fight if I would reign;  
Increase my courage Lord;  
I'll bear the toil, endure the pain,  
Supported by thy Word.

Thy saints in all this glorious war  
Shall conquer, though they die;  
They see the triumph from afar,  
By faith they bring it nigh."

## FALSE PROPHETS. (Verses 15-20.)

Jesus here calls attention to a class of false teachers who would appear among his followers from time to time, and would resist his doctrine as preached by the apostles. He also informs them that these teachers would rise up in

the name of Christ, and would be clad in the habiliments of the other apostles; and that so far as appearances go, they could not be distinguished from the true apostles, for they would indeed have on sheep's clothing. But inwardly these false teachers would be ravening wolves, or destructive leaders; because they would lead against the doctrine of Christ as left to his disciples. He warns against such teachers, so that they might be prepared for them, and that they might not lead astray the flock. Jesus, however, lays down an infallible sign respecting a true knowledge of them. He says, though they come in my name that they may get among you, and though they have on sheep's clothing, "Ye shall know them by their fruits;" because their fruits will declare who they are. Their fruits will point them out just as the fruits of any tree or vine designate it. No man will look on a good tree for corrupt fruit; and if corrupt fruit is found, it points out certainly that the tree is unsound. So with false teachers; though they have on sheep's clothing and act in the garb of the minister of Christ, yet if their doctrine and lives are not in accord it pays to pass them by, for they are false at heart; and this falsity grows out in their actions and the doctrines which they disseminate.

One consolation to the true minister and Christian teacher is, that the Lord of hosts is with him in his efforts to present a pure life and doctrine to the people; and that God has a punishable reward for all who oppose his righteous efforts to preach a whole gospel. While he in the end will certainly be saved, every false teacher shall be cut off in blazing judgments, and cast into the fire of hell.

#### WHO WILL BE SAVED? (Verses 21-23.)

Following the remarks he made in regard to false teachers and lives, Jesus here calls attention to the day of accounts, and allows us, thus early in his ministry and

kingdom, to peep through to adjustment thereof, and see his final reckoning acts. But he first says, it is not every one that addresses him as Lord shall be saved. Lip service is much easier than heart service, which he asks and demands from a clean one; and those who only give lip service will never enter the kingdom. Only those who do the will of the Father will be admitted and allowed to pass Jesus, who is the Door and the Way. Jesus says himself, "Many will say in that day, Lord, have we not prophesied in thy name, and cast out devils and done many wonderful works?" This will doubtless be that class of false prophets of the previous section; it will be all false pretenders and hypocrites, who have been in the Church only in name, and not for Christ's sake and for the sake of doing their duty. But he says his response will be, "I never knew you." What an awful statement this is! It tells us that the evil workers work thus, and bear false fruit in doctrine and actions, because they have never been converted. Christ never knew them, and they never knew him. They only entered the Church visible, and that for some worldly gratification; but never entered the invisible Church of the truly converted. The fallow grounds of their hearts were never broken up, and they were never born again. To this class Jesus says he will speak and say, "Depart from me, ye that work iniquity." Thus we see that he will drive away these people, saying they were workers of iniquity. Reader, will you be in that class, to be driven away?

#### THE TWO BUILDERS. (Verses 24-29.)

Jesus, in keeping with his last statement, that none shall be saved in judgment but those who do the will of the Father, and in keeping with this entire discourse and inimitable sermon, points out the hearer and doer of his sayings, as like a wise builder; and the nonhearer and doer,



as like a foolish builder. The one is called wise, because he built his house upon a rock, and the descending rain and coming floods and blowing winds did not move it. The other is called foolish, because he built his house upon the sand; the very thought is absurd. And when the rain fell and floods came and the winds blew it fell, and great and destructive was the fall thereof. But Jesus would and does teach the importance of a wise beginning and foundation of the spiritual life. The foundation will be laid well in every life that hears and heeds the commands of Jesus, who is the sure foundation-stone, elect and precious; and whosoever builds upon him will never be made ashamed by the foundation giving away when the rains descend and the floods come and the winds blow. In a spiritual sense, rain, floods, and winds here stand for the trials of God's people. All in Christ will be tried by the storms of the wicked one, and efforts will be made to drown them out and to blow them off their course toward God; but Christ, being their under support, as the Rock of Ages, will ever keep them unto the perfect day. There certainly is no surprise to one who reads and studies this sermon, that the people were astonished at his doctrine; for it is so sublime, so divine, so infinitely surpassing everything ever heard from human lips. The patriarchs' and prophets' sayings and utterances are here made perfect and plain. The tradition and formal teachings of the Pharisees appear here only as childish jargon; and what Jesus has said sounds truthful, weighty, and authoritative to the people. Never could the people cease thinking of and commenting upon this sermon. It made profound impressions. It won many disciples, and caused the people to follow the same great Teacher down the mountain.

SECTION 10.—JESUS HEALS THE CENTURION'S SERVANT  
AT CAPERNAUM.

Matt. viii, 5-13; Luke vii, 1-10.

The great Sermon on the Mount has been preached in the summer season of this present year; and then Jesus returned from the plain of Gennesaret to Capernaum, being followed by the multitude. It does seem now that he would seek needed rest; but there was no rest for the great Benefactor. As soon as he enters the city a Roman officer wishes his help. This man is not known by name; but he was a centurion, or ruler of at least one hundred men. And being in rank, he owned or at least employed servants to go, come, and do his biddings. Among his servants was one who had won the esteem and love of his master, the centurion. This valuable servant was sick, and Luke says that he was very dear to his master. It happened that just about this time the disease of the servant changed for the worse; and having, without doubt, preyed upon his body some time, it now brought on such paroxysms as caused the centurion to fear he would die. This disease was palsy; and for its relief the centurion tried every human remedy, but to no good result. So the centurion went to the prominent Jews of the city, and requested that they would go to Jesus, one of their own race, and entreat him to heal his servant. This officer did this to make sure of the Savior's sympathy; for he entreating and believing, and they likewise in his behalf, there could be no doubt of the Master's sympathy. This centurion could also well afford to go to the Jews, for he had won their hearts of love and esteem by building them of Capernaum a synagogue, and this out of his own means, when the Jews could not, on account of their fewness and poverty, build it themselves. So the prominent Jews readily went to call on Jesus in behalf of

the centurion's servant. And the first thing they stated, without waiting for Jesus to make any remarks, was, "This centurion, who asks this much of your kindness, is worthy." Then, to call out the sympathy of Jesus, they said, "He loveth our nation and hath built us a synagogue." Jesus certainly felt like approving this kindness toward his Father's name and his race; but he did not need this to draw out his big heart of sympathy and hand of pitying help. He was ever willing to help, not only the Jews, but even this bloody Roman centurion, if he can only believe. So at once "Jesus went with them," and he went to do them good. He never went in vain; but both willing and able to save.

But as Jesus was on his way to the house of the centurion and not far away, but perhaps in sight, he was met by some friends of the centurion, whom he had sent to bear a message to Jesus. The message was: "Sir, trouble not thyself to come further: for I am not worthy that thou shouldest enter under my roof: wherefore neither thought I myself worthy to come unto thee; but say in a word, and my servant shall be healed. For I also am a man set under authority, having under me soldiers, and I say unto one, Go, and he goeth; and to another, Come, and he cometh; and to my servant, Do this, and he doeth it." Here we have a most remarkable message from a very eminent man of great faith in the Lord Jesus. We have no way of knowing how this pagan Roman officer acquired such faith in Jesus Christ. We are left to only infer. And we suggest, first, that this officer had received much knowledge of Jesus by word of many who spoke of his mighty works in and out of the city. Second, that he had seen many of the marvelous works of Jesus; probably he had seen the nobleman's son whom Jesus healed in the same city while he still sat in Cana; for this nobleman was also a Roman. Third, the general reputation of Jesus had much to do with generating

a saving faith in this man. Anyway, he did have a great and saving faith in the Prophet of Nazareth. He had a remarkable faith, because upon it Jesus acted, and at the same time commended it. The centurion beautifully expressed his faith in terms of his official duties. He acknowledged, first, that he was a subject, with Roman officials over him whom he obeyed. Then he remarked, on the other hand, I have soldiers and servants under me who go and come and act at my word. By this language he would say to Jesus, "I believe that nature is in your hands, and that diseases can not linger when you order out. These must and do obey you as my soldiers and servants do me." This language, in a Roman officer, led Jesus to marvel. Then Jesus turned his face toward the people, and said, "I have not found so great faith, no, not in Israel, or among my own people."

This faith did not go unrewarded, but reaped a joyous and desirable fruit. The servant, by the very will and secret ordering of Jesus there in the street, was treated of that paralysis which hitherto had brought the man to face death. So those sent to bear the message to Jesus returned to the house of the officer, and found the servant well. We hear no more of this centurion; but we must believe that he never more had any questions as to Jesus being the great Prophet of a Superior Being. One thing more Jesus said should not go unnoticed. He said in reference to this faith: "Many shall come from the east and west, and shall sit down with Abraham, and Isaac, and Jacob in the kingdom of God. But the children of the kingdom shall be cast out into outer darkness; there shall be weeping and gnashing of teeth." How true are these words even to-day! Many who live in gospel privileges will not use them; and many who are vile of life and works will repent and pass into heaven ahead of the favored of God.

## SECTION 11.—JESUS RAISES THE WIDOW'S SON AT NAIN.

Luke vii, 11-17.

We now follow Jesus in his eleventh move of the second year out of Capernaum to Nain. This trip was entered upon the day following the healing of the centurion's servant. It is late summer-time, and the journey between the two places was not great. Nain lies southwest from Capernaum, and about two miles from Mount Tabor and near to Endor. This trip of Jesus was attended by his disciples, and is in some respects a very interesting tour, for some striking occurrences happened, as we shall see, before Jesus went back home to Capernaum. The most interesting event of this journey is the act of raising the widow's son to life. Of course, Jesus had before this done many wonderful works; but we have no instance of him actually ushering in the resurrection powers prior to now. This miracle is remarkable for bringing out the human nature of Christ, as well as his Divine. We truly see in the tender sympathy shown a lone widow woman by raising her only son, her sole dependence for life and comfort, the true humanity of Jesus blended with his Divinity. But let us look at the occurrence. Jesus, with his disciples, was going into the city of Nain. The city, as most Eastern cities, was fortified by a wall and entered through gates. Jesus was near to one of the gates; and as he came he met a funeral procession. It was attended by its mourners and dirges. These mourners and obsequies were largely attended by citizens. The chief mourner was a woman who some time before now had followed her husband out of the same gate and along the same path to the cemetery, whither they were now going to lay her only son. The grief of this poor woman was intense. She in all probability had no other children; she certainly had no other son. She had not a great while before lost her husband. She now loses her only son left by the father,

and he dies in young manhood, just when he becomes mature enough in age and judgment to be of service to her. Her heart was so sorrowful and mental pains so sharp, that no earthly comfort could relieve her. Jesus sees her in this condition; he sees her broken heart and sorrow-riven mind; he realizes that she is helpless; and hearing her groans and pitiful lamentations, he is moved with compassion toward her. He steps up to her side and says in tenderest accents; yea, speaks as no other friend had spoken or could speak, "Weep not." This was enough. These two words were sufficient. They were a guaranty of comfort and restoration of that dead child. But note how Jesus gives comfort to distressed hearts before he interferes with other matters. The boy was dead, and his spirit was in the spirit land; and these Jesus let rest, momentarily, to relieve widowhood and suffering. "He is a present help in the time of trouble." When he had comforted the widowed mother in their slow passage to the tomb (for Jesus had never in all the while stopped the procession, but rather joined it for a distance), "he then came and touched the bier." The bier was a kind of wood frame used to carry dead bodies upon, in the hands of men, to the tombs. When Jesus touched the bier the bearers stood still. Then Jesus said to the corpse, "Young man, I say unto thee, Arise." This voice of the Divine Son was powerful and loud enough to reach the spirit land, and call back that soul which had entered upon its eternal state. This is a fact, because "he that was dead sat up, and began to speak." There was no question about his having been dead; for time had solved that problem, and they were on their way to the tomb for interment. There also was no question about his resurrection; for he sat up, he talked, he got up, and Jesus, his Resurrector, delivered him to his widowed mother. So the great work of miraculous power is now over. But what more about this resurrection—this first coming through Jesus from the dead? First, we note



it had effects: fear came upon all that funeral procession. This was reverential awe; it led the people to glorify God and say, "A great Prophet is risen among us; and, That God has visited his people."

This miracle gave new wings to the already great fame of Jesus, and carried it throughout all Judea, and throughout all the region round about.

"What a Friend we have in Jesus,  
All our sins and grief to bear!"

#### SECTION A.—JESUS STILL IN GALILEE AND JOHN THE BAPTIST SENDS HIS DISCIPLES TO JESUS. JESUS'S TESTIMONY.

Matt. ii, 2-19; Luke vii, 18-35.

We call our section here A, because we do not agree with those who make Jesus's return at this juncture to Capernaum from Nain to receive the disciples of John. We have only two reporters here, Matthew and Luke; and Matthew is so careless in his chronology, that we must rely for the most part upon Luke. While we hold that Jesus is still in Galilee, where he receives John's messengers and testifies of him, we have no knowledge of what particular place he is in. He may be still in Nain when they come; if not there, doubtless in some unknown town of Galilee, according to Luke.

The spreading fame of Jesus came to John the Baptist, who was in the spring of this year, A. D. 28, cast into the Macherus prison by Herod Antipas and his adulterous wife, whom he had treacherously won from the hand of his brother Philip. This fame of Jesus was carried to the prisoner by his disciples. They told John what they had heard and seen of Jesus; but especially of his actually raising the dead at Nain. They told John this, first, as a matter of news; and, secondly, by way of asking indirectly, If this man can

do every good thing and all mysterious things, why is it that he does not do something for you, his baptizer and herald? This question we only infer, but some such question was certainly asked John, and was agitating his mind. And we know this from two sources. First, John, in prison, called two of his disciples; second, he sent them to Jesus to ask, "Art thou he that should come? or look we for another?" So they brought this self-same message to Jesus. Now this message shows that John had grown despondent, and was weakening in his faith. This, too, was natural; for he had been for several months a prisoner, and had received no visit, word, nor any act of power or intercession at all from Jesus, whom he had placed on every occasion before him. On the other hand, when he was arrested, Jesus went away entirely out of that region, apparently as one friend deserting another in the time of trouble. From a human point of view Jesus seems blameworthy. John in his human weakness asked him, "Are you the expected promised Messiah, or do you order us, as an honest man, to look for another? one who will stand by his followers who have stood up and honored him even in danger?" Anyway, John did not entirely lose heart, but held to the ray of hope and to the frame of Divine manifestations given him concerning Jesus. He held on, anxiously awaiting the response of Jesus.

But now, before we take up this response we must look more into the actions of Jesus respecting John's trouble. First, the object of Jesus in leaving Judea and the neighborhood of John's imprisonment was to go on with his own important work, which was then in its incipency; and if Jesus should have left it off to intermeddle with civil affairs it would have perished or been greatly impeded, on account of his absence. And Jesus knew the salvation of the world was greater than the temporal deliverance of

John. Secondly, Jesus knew he had inveterate enemies at Jerusalem and in all Judea, and that, after the incarceration of John, they would attempt to lay hands upon him; for they had already sought his life at Jerusalem. And by going away he knew he could avoid any of the above causes. Thirdly, the action of Jesus here is teachable—that he was not in the world to interfere with earthly matters and civil governments, but rather to improve men morally and spiritually. So every gospel minister will do well to keep out of politics, keep the Church and State separate, and make the work of saving souls his only duty. Again, Jesus did and did not desert John. He remembered him at a throne of grace, and for his sake John was blessed of God and prepared for his coming doom. John had to decrease, and Jesus increase. This he himself saw. And Jesus knew it was no worse for John to pass away his remaining days in prison, since his work was done, and die as a martyr, than for himself to be homeless and restless, and die a more shameful death. It is not the body Jesus is principally after, anyway, but the soul. He taught, “Fear not them that kill the body, but fear him who can destroy both soul and body in hell.” Now for the response of Jesus to John through his disciples.

This response to John’s inquiry was not made direct in words, but in an indirect manner, and so as to remove all doubts from the mind of the prisoner. Jesus first replied through his works. This is always the best way to prove our sincerity and genuineness in all things. He wrought, right before the eyes of those messengers, many miracles, so they themselves might become faithful witnesses, and thus become better messengers to meet their despondent master. After the miracles of Jesus, he sent the disciples of John away with these words, “Go and show John again those things which ye do hear and see: the blind receive

their sight, and the lame walk; the lepers are cleansed, and the deaf hear; the dead are raised up, and the poor have the gospel preached to them: and blessed is he, whosoever shall not be offended in me." This answer, given thus to John, was far better and stronger than it would have been for Jesus to have said, "Yes, tell John I am verily the One who should come." The step Jesus took was convincing testimony to his Messiahship to both John and his disciples. We never hear of John or his disciples being despondent any more, and if John's mind were enlightened by miraculous powers, declaring Jesus the true Messiah, and if his heart were established in this faith, that was all Jesus wished and sought to do, and this he did do.

When the messengers of John were gone, Jesus began to speak of John by way of testimony, and we shall note, from the testimony, that Jesus held John in very high esteem. He began to testify by asking such questions as would enhance the moral worth of the man. He asked: "What went ye out into the wilderness for to see? A reed shaken with the wind?" No, he means to say, John was no sycophant nor person of such levity that any wind of opinion could drive him about as a reed. But he was righteous, of an iron will, and outspoken against wrong, even in the king.

They went not to see a delicately-appareled courtier who was under tutors and governors. They went to see a prophet of God; yea, and much more than a prophet. And he was much more because he had seen Him whom "prophets and kings desired long, but died without the sight." He had more perfect knowledge of him as the Messiah. He could better understand the promised kingdom which was to fill the whole earth. John was the messenger spoken of by Mal. iii, 1, who should prepare the way of the Lord. Yet, with all of his greatness in Messianic knowledge, he was less than the least in the kingdom of God; that is, his

knowledge of Jesus and his kingdom, as they stand fully revealed, is less than that of the most illiterate gospel minister.

Then Jesus testified that all the people, including the publicans, justified God for punishing sin, when repentance was preached by John, and the people repented not. These also accepted John's baptism; but the Pharisees and lawyers rejected the counsel of God, and were not baptized unto repentance.

SECTION B.—JESUS STILL IN GALILEE. IS ANOINTED BY  
A WOMAN IN SIMON'S HOUSE. HE DISCOURSES.

Luke vii, 36-50.

The anointing, feast, and discourse mentioned here, according to Luke, our only reporter, took place somewhere in Galilee. But this anointing must not be confounded with the one at Bethany, mentioned by Matt. xxvi, 6, Mark xiv, 3, and John xi, 2.

Jesus, wherever he was at this time, was invited by a Pharisee to dine. So Jesus went, and, as usual, took his seat at the table. Just at this time a woman, noted for bad character (what we would call a street-walker or prostitute), seeing Jesus sitting, and knowing who he was, walked into the room, and brought an alabaster box of ointment with which to anoint his feet. We do not know who this woman was, her name, nor anything else. It has been supposed, and even said, by many, that it was Mary Magdalene; but there is no really good reason for such supposition and assertion. This supposition grew from two sources; namely, first, that Jesus was at this time near Capernaum and Magdala, the home of this Mary, and that this convenience brought her into the presence of Jesus. Second, because it is written that Jesus cast seven devils out of this Mary. But neither one of these reasons is sufficient to positively declare that this woman was Mary Mag-

dalene. On the other hand, the distance we are from Magdala and Capernaum, and the lifetime character of Magdalene with Jesus, go to tell us loudly that in all probability this was not Mary Magdalene; for she would have hardly been so far from home at this time and so bold among strangers. And she was always the most leading of the female disciples, the most intimate friend of Jesus to the last, and she was always found in the association of the best women who followed Jesus, all of which point out that she was not of bad character; but the woman here was.

However it was, this woman was very penitent, and anxious to become saved. She was not ashamed; but stood behind Jesus and at his feet as he reclined at the table, and wept till her tears washed his feet. Then with her flowing hair she wiped them, and kissed, and anointed them with the precious ointment.

Then the Pharisee who invited Jesus, as usual, began to murmur; but this he did inwardly. He said, "If this man were a prophet, he would have known who and what manner of woman this is that toucheth him: for she is a sinner." We must credit Jesus for this inward thinking of the Pharisee; for if he had not brought it to light, we would not have it. Jesus brought it to light as follows: He said, "Simon, I have somewhat to say unto thee. There was a certain creditor which had two debtors: the one owed five hundred pence, and the other fifty. And when they had nothing to pay, he frankly forgave them both. Tell me, therefore, which of them will love him most?" Now Simon answers, "I suppose that he to whom he forgave most." Jesus replied, "Thou hast rightly judged." Then Jesus turned to the woman, and said unto the Pharisee: "Seest thou this woman? I entered into thine house, thou gavest me no water for my feet: but she hath washed my feet with tears, and wiped them with the hairs of her head. Thou gavest me no kiss: but this woman,



since the time I came in, hath not ceased to kiss my feet. My head with oil thou dist not anoint: but this woman hath anointed my feet with ointment. Wherefore, I say unto thee, Her sins, which are many, are forgiven; for she loved much: but to whom little is forgiven, the same loveth little." Then Jesus turned to the poor, penitent sinner, in her weeping and mourning under sin and the accusing conscience, and said, "Thy sins are forgiven."

Other Pharisees, doubtless, who were invited, began also to say inwardly, "Who is this that forgiveth sins also?" This questioning was not sincere, but rather in ridicule. But for the comfort of the woman, Jesus again spoke, and said, Never mind any hinting jeers or doubtings, "thy faith hath saved thee: go in peace."

This beautiful and affecting passage is so true to point out Christianity and humanity. Jesus shows here a smiling face and a tender, sympathetic, and forgiving spirit, while man sets himself up in frowns upon sin, criticises, repels, and would show no mercy to them not half so bad as he is himself.

Jesus had said, however, many publicans and harlots would "come from the east and west and sit down with Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob in the kingdom of God. But the children of the kingdom shall be cast out into outer darkness: there shall be weeping and gnashing of teeth." (Matt. viii, 11, 12.) This prophecy is fulfilled here in this poor harlot, who, repenting truly, gets forgiveness, while the self-righteous Pharisees go on, in their blindness and sin, to hell, unforgiven.

#### SECTION C.—JESUS PREACHES IN GALILEE.

Luke viii, 1-3.

We now notice Jesus giving special attention to proclaiming the glad tidings of repentance and remission of sins. He is *en route*, and visiting the cities and villages

of Galilee. He is attended by his disciples, and not only so, but by certain women whom he had healed of infirmities, of evil spirits, and those out of whom he had cast devils. Also, there were women of rank, such as Joanna, the wife of Chusa, Herod's steward, and Susanna, and many others. These women ministered unto Jesus of their substance, and cared for his temporal necessities. This is the first account of women disciples attending him, and these were principally up from about Capernaum, and, most probably, were at some city or town not far distant, to which Jesus had come preaching; for Jesus was then preaching on his way back to Capernaum. These women would gladly join this holy company of Jesus and the twelve at any time, when convenient and near, that they might hear Jesus and join in his saving work. They were quite anxious to hear Jesus now; for it had been several weeks since he had been about the sea. He left after the great sermon in the summer, and it was now in the early fall. Anyway, Jesus has journeyed on toward the sea, and we shall next find him in Capernaum, where he continued his beneficent labors.

SECTION 12.—JESUS AT CAPERNAUM. HE HEALS A DUMB AND BLIND MAN. HIS DISCOURSE SUBSEQUENTLY.

Matt. xii, 22-37.

Jesus has now returned to Capernaum, his home, and the friends of a man, both blind and dumb and possessed with a devil, brought him to Jesus to be cured of these three great and incurable maladies—blindness, dumbness, and a devil. Jesus, upon their solicitation, and looking at the pitiable subject, was moved with compassion to act. This poor man had, through the effects of sin and the devil in him, lost one of his senses and the use of his vocal powers; hence, he was in a desperate condition. Jesus had had no patient through whom he could more certainly demonstrate his miraculous power to the unquestionable convic-

tion of both friends and foes. This man's case required, as it were, a miracle in a miracle. He was threefoldly impaired. Jesus had to restore sight by recreating the visual organs; had to restore hearing by regenerating the interior ears; for the entire life of the parts had been exhausted; and then had to use, as the strong man, his powers to bind the devil and expel him. Jesus did all that was needed, and set the man up perfectly sound again. But just how he did it we do not know. We do n't know but that he said to the eyes, "Be open;" and to the ears, "Be unstopped;" and to the devil, "Come out of the man." If not this, he may have touched the man's eyes and ears, and thus restored them. But he was saved, it matters not how, and the people were witnesses; for they were amazed, and questioned, "Is not this the Son of David?" This was to ask, Is this not the prophetic Messiah? Does he not fulfill all expectations of the Christ? Who but the Messiah could do such things as these? But there were the same old adversaries of Jesus, the Pharisees, who, when they heard such questions, and knowing that they were questions of the people's convictions, said, "This fellow [notice the epithet, "fellow," though not original, yet it appropriately expresses the sense] doth not cast out devils, but by Beelzebub, the prince of devils." Alas, what a prejudicial, false, absurd, and wicked statement! What a hard devil to kill is prejudice! This cowardly meanness, however, they only spoke among themselves. They did not openly contradict Jesus in the crowd; for the act of healing was too convincing, and had too much sway upon the people. But Jesus cares nothing for a man's words to be able to read his thoughts. He read such thoughts in their hearts, to which he confoundingly replied, "Every kingdom divided against itself is brought to desolation; and every city or house divided against itself shall not stand." This was talk which the daily experiences of the people taught to

be true; therefore, more convincing when Jesus reaches his point. Jesus continues: "And if Satan cast out Satan, he is divided against himself; how shall then his kingdom stand? And if I by Beelzebub cast out devils, by whom do your children cast them out? therefore, they shall be your judges." Here Jesus cuts to the very quick when he pours his terse, logical question in regard to their children casting out devils. The Jewish Pharisees were like the Egyptians toward Moses. When this man of God worked real miracles, as his credentials, before Pharaoh, the magicians of Egypt worked, through exorcism, apparently, the same. So the disciples of the Pharisees had some knowledge of conjuration, and claimed thereby really to cast out evil spirits. And when Jesus really did cast out devils, these Pharisees claimed that it was through being leagued with the devil. But after Jesus shows that Satan can not stand divided against himself, he pertinently asks them, "By whom or what power do your children cast them out if I do so by the power of the wicked one?" This is an unanswerable question. It is incriminating and self-murderous to them. Then Jesus goes on with his speech, "But if I cast out devils by the Spirit of God, then the kingdom of God is come unto you." Then, as usual, to drive up the logical nail and rivet it, Jesus asks some questions: "Or else how can one enter into a strong man's house, and spoil his goods, except he first bind the strong man? and then he will spoil his house." By this question Jesus means to show that he is not in any league with Satan, who aided him to expel himself. That the league they accused him of was contradicted by the fact that his works were destructive of the works of the devil, and, therefore, he was against the devil, and not for him. Then Jesus turns and points out the awfulness of their crime, to speak out against the truth of which they had every evidence before them. He points out their crime thus: "All manner of sin and

blasphemy shall be forgiven unto men: but the blasphemy against the Holy Ghost shall not be forgiven unto men. And whosoever speaketh a word against the Son of man, it shall be forgiven him: but whosoever speaketh against the Holy Ghost, it shall not be forgiven him, neither in this world, neither in the world to come." Is not this terrible language? The Pharisees had spoken wickedly and enviously; but their language was not half so far-reaching as this of Jesus relative to them. Jesus never spoke against them at all; yea, more, they spoke further than Jesus; they reached up and spoke against the Agency by which Jesus wrought; namely, the Holy Ghost. So Jesus acquaints them with the results of their folly and wickedness. He tells them their language against him is pardonable; but that against the Holy Ghost, by whom (verse 28) he cast out the devil, is unpardonable, both in this world and in that which is to come. It may be well to say a word more here respecting

#### THE SIN AND BLASPHEMY AGAINST THE HOLY GHOST.

We do this because this is nervous language. It is a sin that agitates the minds of people, and so many are anxious to know what is this sin, and whether they can commit it now, etc. The space we might take can not be found here; so we will be very brief. The sin or blasphemy against the Holy Ghost is like any other sin against the Son of God. It is only doing or speaking against the agency of the Holy Ghost as against the Agency of the Son. The difference is in that we pass the mercy-line in speaking against the Holy Ghost, but do not when we speak against the Son. But you may ask, How may I know and when do I pass the mercy-line? I answer, It is when you have had sufficient warning against sin, and have been fully persuaded to accept Christ as the Man of your salvation, and then you ride on over his commands.

The Pharisees here had had full proofs of the Divinity of Jesus, and yet they resisted his words and warnings through stubborn obduracy, and dared to speak against the power of the Holy Ghost in him, by which he cast out the devil; therefore, they transcended the line of mercy by their blasphemy against him (the Holy Ghost).

Then, again, Jesus proceeds by saying, "Either make the tree good, and his fruit good; or else make the tree corrupt, and his fruit corrupt; for the tree is known by his fruits." By this language he would further say, It is your solemn duty, O Pharisees, to own that I am a good or bad Man; but if my works are good, you must acknowledge that I am a good Man; for we judge the tree by its fruits.

Then Jesus comes down upon them as if righteously indignant. He says, in a characteristic manner, "O generation of vipers, how can ye, being evil, speak good things? for out of the abundance of the heart the mouth speaketh. A good man out of the good treasure of the heart, bringeth forth good things: and an evil man out of the evil treasure bringeth forth evil things." Then he closes this line of thought by telling them that men shall account to God for all their idle words; that by men's words they shall be justified or condemned in the judgment-day.

SECTION A.—THE PHARISEES AND SCRIBES SEEK A SIGN.—  
(38-45.)

Jesus is still in Capernaum; but just whether the Pharisees who spoke blasphemy against the Holy Ghost above are the same ones who now seek a sign, and whether it is in the same place and in the same hour, we can not tell; for Matthew gives us no clue. It does seem that they are not the first that spoke against him; for they had seen the miracle of blindness and dumbness, and spoke against it. They, then, would hardly ask another miracle, and especially after Jesus had so wounded their consciences by



his accusing them of committing the unpardonable sin, and so winding them up in their own absurd attacks.

However, these scribes and Pharisees sought that Jesus would show them a sign from heaven. This they asked to gratify curiosity and that they might accuse him. But Jesus did not use his Divine energies to gratify hypocritical curiosity. He only acted when thus moved by compassion, and when the case was hopeless for which his mercies were asked. So Jesus replied, characteristically, "An evil and adulterous generation seeketh after a sign; and there shall no sign be given unto it but the sign of the Prophet Jonas." Here is to be noted how Jesus held the house of Israel, and how they treated him. He held them as his Bride, and he sustained the relation of a faithful Husband. But they had not proved faithful to him by keeping his commandments, and had adulterated his Word with all manner of traditional observances; hence, they were appropriately called "an evil and adulterous generation."

Jesus continues, "For as Jonas was three days and three nights in the whale's belly: so shall the Son of man be three days and three nights in the heart of the earth." It is plain that Jesus here points out his burial and resurrection, which were to last not, indeed, fully three days and nights, but part of this time; for Jesus was buried late Friday, and remained in the tomb Friday night, Saturday, and Saturday night, and arose early Sunday morning. But it was a Jewish custom to speak of a partial day as the entire day; so it is said three days. Jonah, it is most probable, only remained in the whale's belly for the same length of time; that is, about thirty-six hours. However, in speaking of the whale, it must not be understood to mean the same animal so called in our Western waters; for our whale does not exist in Mediterranean waters except by accident. It was, probably, the shark that swallowed Jonah, as this fish abounds in said sea, and is a great man-eater.

Jesus continues, "The men of Nineveh shall rise up in judgment with this generation, and shall condemn it: because they repented at the preaching of Jonas; and, behold, a greater [or more] than Jonas is here. The queen of the south shall rise up in the judgment with this generation, and shall condemn it: for she came from the uttermost parts of the earth to hear the wisdom of Solomon; and, behold, a greater [or more] than Solomon is here." After these scathing remarks, Jesus proceeds to point out the true character of the house of Israel. He says, When the unclean spirit (the devil) is gone out of a man, he (the devil) walketh through dry places (hearts where the devil is not accepted), seeking rest (or acceptability), and findeth none, because the heart does not entertain him. Jesus here would point out that the devil had walked among the Gentile hearts seeking acceptability; but because of faith in him, and preaching the gospel of righteousness, he (the devil) found not the acceptability of unrighteous disbelief. Therefore, he saith (the devil), I will return into my house (the Jewish hearts) from whence I came out; and when he is come, he findeth it empty, swept, and garnished. That is to say, the house of Israel had offered to them, by the prophets, the law, and Jesus, everything to put them in polished order or righteousness. But they only used their opportunities of Divine knowledge to combat the Son of God, and thus made a house of wickedness of their hearts for the devil, who, returning to them as the rejectors of the truth, took with him seven other spirits (or in seven-fold power) more wicked than himself (or accustomed to be), and they entered in and dwelt there; (that is, Satan, with seven-fold determination, re-entered Jewish hearts, which he hardened with prejudice, and blinded their spiritual eyes so they would not see the truth). Therefore, the last state of that man (or the Jews) is worse than the first. How true it was thus said that rebellious-hearted Israel

is still under the bane of unbelief in the Son, is still holding to Pharisaic Judaism, and is well proving the truth of the assertion "that the last state is worse than the first!"

SECTION B.—JESUS IS INTERRUPTED BY HIS MOTHER.

Matt. 46-50; Mark iii, 31-35; Luke viii, 19-21.

We are still at Capernaum with Jesus, and as he has talked on with the Pharisees a great crowd has also surrounded him, till they were unpleasantly situated. And in the crowd there appeared his mother and brothers, who expressed a desire to speak with him. So Jesus's attention was called by one who said, "Behold, thy mother and thy brethren stand without, desiring to speak with thee." This act of his mother and brothers was perfectly natural; yet Jesus shows the importance of his work by, first, not leaving it for mother and brothers; secondly, by showing that the Father's work is of such nature and character that it makes every man a brother or sister that does it. Jesus pointed to his disciples, and not to the sons of Mary, and called them his brethren, because they were doing the will of the Father.

So it is to be observed that the religion of Jesus Christ does not only provide friends, ordinarily, but gives us even parents and relatives of the tenderest feeling; for "godliness is profitable unto all things, having promise of the life that now is and of that which is to come."

SECTION 13.—ON PLAIN OF GENNESARET JESUS SPEAKS PARABLES.

Matt. xiii, 1-23; Mark iv, 1-25; Luke viii, 4-18.

Jesus makes his thirteenth move now from Capernaum out upon the plain of Gennesaret, or the sea beach, where he delivered a discourse remarkable for parables. We must not forget that we are in the fall of the year, and this discourse follows immediately the words of the preceding

chapter which Jesus had had concerning his mother, brethren, and those who are his parents or relatives.

Jesus, on the beach, had such a crowd that it became necessary for him to enter a small boat, in which he sat, and the crowd stood on the shore to listen to him. Now, as he spoke many parables to them, I will present them numerically.

PARABLE NO. 1.—THE SOWER. (3-23.)

Jesus said, when asked by his disciples why he used parabolic language, "Because it is given unto you [my disciples] to know the mysteries of the kingdom of heaven, but to them [the unbelievers] it is not given." Then Jesus said this mysterious knowledge of the mysteries of the kingdom is to be thus added to; so that those possessing its knowledge shall have more; and those without this knowledge, in full, shall lose what they really possess. For they who disbelieve, see, and yet do n't see; and hear and do n't hear, neither do they understand.

This unbelieving class, he said, fulfill the prophecy of Esaias, who said, "By hearing they shall hear, and shall not understand; and, seeing, shall see and not perceive." Thus it was because "their hearts were waxed gross, and their ears were dull of hearing, and their eyes they closed, lest at any time they should have seen with their eyes and heard with their ears and understood with their hearts, and been converted, and God should have healed them.

Then Jesus pronounced a blessing upon the eyes and ears of his disciples, in that they were able to behold and hear what many prophets and righteous men had desired to see and hear and could not.

So much, then, for the reason of Jesus to speak in parables and its results to believers, both possessively and intellectually. We now turn to the discussion of the parables.

The sower went out to sow, and his seeds fell variously upon four specified places; namely: (1) by the wayside; (2) upon stony places; (3) among thorns; and (4) into good ground.

Now as to results. The first were devoured by the birds, which even to-day attend abundantly the sowers of grain in the East. These seed were devoured because they were sown by the wayside, and fell an easy prey to the fowl. This sowing, then, it is to be observed, was a failure because there was not only no harvest, but no tillage; for the grain did not germinate and grow.

The second fell on stony places, where they had not much earth, hence little moisture; therefore they soon sprang up. But when the sun rose, they were withered by scorching, and died. Thus we see the seeds on stony ground failed to produce a harvest. It is true that they did come up; but that was all. They were short-lived because they were unrooted.

The third fell among thorns, and with the seed, or before, the thorns sprang up and choked the seed. For this reason we see a failure of the harvest, since the choking thorns had prevented growth; and if there was any maturity of any grain, it could not be garnered.

The fourth fell into good ground, and brought forth fruit—some a hundred-fold, some sixty-fold, and some thirty-fold. Thus we see an increasing harvest of full returns to the sower. But this harvest is the result of sowing into good ground.

Now, we perhaps would never understand this parable were it not that Jesus himself explains it. And he explains it as follows: The seed by the wayside is he that heareth the Word of the kingdom, and understandeth it not. Then cometh the wicked one, and catcheth away that which was sown in his heart.

The seed on stony places is he who heareth the Word, and anon, with joy, receiveth it; yet hath he not root in himself, but dureth for awhile; for when tribulation or persecution ariseth because of the Word, by and by he is offended.

The seed among thorns is he that heareth the Word; and the care of this world and the deceitfulness of riches choke the Word, and he becometh unfruitful.

The seed on good ground is he that heareth the Word and understandeth it, which also beareth fruit and bringeth forth, some a hundred-fold, some sixty and some thirty. Thus we have the parable and its meaning, which can not be further defined.

PARABLE NO. 2.—THE TARES. (24-30.)

Jesus also spoke another parable, as follows: "The kingdom of heaven is likened unto a man which sowed good seed in his field; but while men slept, his enemy came and sowed tares among the wheat, and went his way. But when the blade was sprung up and brought forth fruit, then appeared the tares also. So the servants of the householder came and said unto him, Sir, did'st not thou sow good seed in thy field? From whence, then, hath it tares?" Then comes the reply of the householder. "He said unto them, An enemy hath done this. The servants said unto him, Wilt thou that we go and gather them up? But he said, Nay, lest while ye gather up the tares ye root up also the wheat with them. Let both grow together until the harvest; and in the time of harvest I will say to the reapers, Gather ye together first the tares, and bind them in bundles to burn them; but gather the wheat into my barn." We now have the parable, with privilege to examine and apply it. We give the following application, as we think it consonant with the explanation of Jesus, then append his explanation.



The kingdom here spoken of is God's Divine government in the world—his Church, in which the unadulterated Word is preached and enforced. The sleeping refers to those times when the believers grow careless and lukewarm, but especially the ministers of the gospel. It is true that when the Church's activities are mostly undone, the devil takes advantage of the saints, and does more then to sow discord and raise up heresies than at any other time. It is then that he sows the tares of evil influences. When Satan, the evil sower of tares, has sown his evil and Satanic influences of heresies and false teaching among the saints and in the pure Word of God, they will spring up; for it does seem that the spurious seeds always more readily come up and grow than that which is desired and wholesome. And the influences of the wicked one do not only come up, but they literally choke and destroy the good plants.

We are also to see in these tares, not only false teachings, heresies, and evils of the shepherd life, but persons who enter the Christian fold, whose lives tell us they have never been really and truly converted. Their examples are poor, their influences are bad, and their membership is worthless; yet somehow they don't do quite bad enough to be expelled, and they are not good enough to keep in the fold. They really are only tares; for they were not planted by the Lord Jesus, and are certainly not of the fold. But it has always been a puzzle what to do with and how to deal with such persons, both in the ministerial ranks and in the laity. Some suggest cutting them off hastily, since, as decaying members, they affect the whole body; and yet, in spite of the erroneous in doctrine and example, there will always be some to think, speak, and act favorably toward them, and take their part. Such favoring the erring always leads to abruption and uprooting, not only of the bad, but also of the good. It can

never be questioned, at any rate, that the evils found in the Church are the works of the devil; but those in authority are cautioned to go very slowly and wisely in dealing with such, lest more harm be done the entire body than good be accomplished. Jesus would seem to say it were better to allow some errors pass and some bad influences exist than to tear asunder therefor any whole communion. That a reckoning time draws near in every man's case, when his Father will separate all the rotten from the sound, both in doctrine and character, and will burn the unsound and protect the sound.

But, taking the explanation of Jesus, it is thus: The sower is the Son himself, or Jesus. However, he is represented now by the ministers of the Word. The field is the world. The good seed are the children of the kingdom, and the tares are the children of the wicked one. The enemy that soweth them is the devil. The harvest is the end of the world, and the reapers are the angels. Then Jesus closes by showing what shall be the final disposition of all characters, good and bad.

### PARABLE NO. 3. THE MUSTARD-SEED. (31, 32.)

Jesus speaks the third parable as follows: "The kingdom of heaven is like to a grain of mustard-seed, which a man took and sowed in his field, which indeed is the least of all seeds; but when it is grown, it is the greatest among herbs, and becometh a tree, so that the birds of the air come and lodge in the branches thereof." This parable, as to its truthfulness, could be and would be more highly appreciated in tropical countries than in the more northern climes; for in warm climates the mustard plant produced by the small seed, which is the smallest seed planted, does truly grow to almost incredible size. The

leaves are exceedingly broad and long, and the stalk becomes so very tree-like that birds build their nests in its branches; and men and boys can climb upon the border branches. Jesus says now that the kingdom of heaven is like this plant; but the question is, In what respect is it like this plant? What does Jesus mean to teach here?

We notice that Jesus takes the plant of the smallest seed, and that plant which, though it has a small beginning, grows to enormous sizes and outstrips every other garden herb. He then would say the kingdom of God in the earth has an humble beginning, yea, a smaller beginning than any earthly kingdom; but it would grow and spread its branches till it would become the greatest of all kingdoms, and would fill the whole earth. Jesus did mean and say these things; but did he speak the truth? Is his kingdom the greatest of all? And has it prospects to fill the whole earth? Yes, verily, his is the greatest; first, because the oldest. No religious or secular kingdom can compare with it in age; for the kingdom of Christ goes back, not to the Bethlehem nativity only, but to the first Messianic-promised seed that should bruise the serpent's head; yea, to the first offering for sin and groan for redemption. It is the greatest because the most universal and powerful, because all others must and do look up to it for wholesome examples and enlightenment. As to its prospects, they are flattering. No kingdom to-day can and does think about claiming universal sway and dominion, except the kingdom of Christ. And, what is better still, because of the blessed fruits of Christianity everywhere leavening and lifting civilization to its highest pitch, every kingdom is inviting the Christian kingdom, and those that have it are shoving it on to those who have it not. And the nations most efficient, powerful, and influential are the nations with the Christian kingdom before them. The

prospects are that all barriers must give way to the onward progress of this kingdom; and its triumphs will be sure. Christianity has so allied itself with every move and reform for human welfare that it has become indispensable to civil and social laws. Hence skepticism, infidel scoffing, and all other uprisings against it are fast being buried.

PARABLE No. 4.—THE LEAVEN. (33.)

The fourth parable is as follows: "The kingdom of heaven is like unto leaven, which a woman took and hid in three measures of meal, till the whole was leavened."

This parable, in mission, is to serve very much the same end as that of the mustard-seed. They both are prophetic of the successful energies of the kingdom of our Lord. But there are two senses in which the Christian kingdom is like leaven: First, it is the function of leaven to permeate the dough by imparting thereto its own nature. So we are taught and see that the kingdom of God in the world is to enter men and fill them so full of itself that what is in them earthly, sensual, and devilish, must be driven out and the heart be cleansed. These are what we call the regenerating acts of the Holy Spirit; and the results are justification. And further acts are consecrating, and bear fruits of sanctification.

Second, it is the function of leaven, not only to permeate dough by imparting itself till the dough is wholly leavened, but it magnifies the bulk, and makes it light. So the kingdom takes hold of man, and, after cleansing the pollution of his tainted heart and giving him a new one, it removes away his burdensome sins as far as the east is from the west; and this gives lightness and entire freedom from the yoke of bondage. Thus is the kingdom of heaven like leaven.

## PARABLE NO. 5.—THE CANDLE.

Mark iv, 21-25.

Matthew somehow seems to omit this parable; but it is given by both Mark and Luke viii, 16. In Mark, Jesus said, "Is a candle brought to be put under a bushel, or under a bed, and not to be set on a candlestick?" Then he comments upon these remarks, and says all hidden and secret things shall be made manifest. And Jesus calls upon all who have ears to hear what he has to say; for what he said was of the utmost importance. But as to the use of the candle: Jesus would teach his believers the importance of proper examples in themselves, as the leaders and teachers of a dark world of sinful ignorance. He had said they were the lights of the world; and he had exhorted them to let their lights so shine that others might see their good works and glorify the Father who is in heaven.

## PARABLE NO. 6.—THE TREASURE.

Matt. xiii, 44.

Concerning the sixth parable, Jesus spoke thus: "The kingdom of God is like unto treasure hid in a field, the which, when a man hath found, he hideth, and for joy thereof goeth and selleth all that he hath, and buyeth that field."

Doubtless, by this parable, Jesus means to bring out the intrinsic value of his spiritual kingdom. It is true, it had a small beginning, and its Founder was poor; yet it is surpassing in its enhancing values, and is worthy the possession of all believers whom it, in turn, enriches. It is also a kingdom of mysteries, and can only be comprehended and possessed by seeking, asking, and knocking with earnestness. It is hidden from the worldly-minded and only revealed unto babes. It is a kingdom spreading out in

wealth and blessedness for all believers. It is not a single wealth, but a far more exceeding mine of fortune spreading out like a boundless ocean.

PARABLE NO. 7.—THE PEARL. (45, 46.)

The seventh parable is thus read: "The kingdom of God is like unto a merchantman seeking goodly pearls, who, when he had found one pearl of great price, went and sold all that he had, and bought it."

This parable has for its object the same as that one last given. The only real difference is in the subject-matter; hence we can easily see its application with the one single suggestion that, whatever it costs to be a Christian, that outlay in repentance, mourning, faith, supplication, and wealth should be dispensed with. Sell all, and buy the pearl. Yes, "Buy the truth, and sell it not."

PARABLE NO. 8.—THE NET. (47-50.)

The eighth parable is thus given: "The kingdom of heaven is like unto a net that was cast into the sea, and gathered of every kind; which, when it was full, they drew to shore, and sat down, and gathered the good into vessels, but cast the bad away. So shall it be at the end of the world: the angels shall come forth and sever the wicked from the just, and shall cast them into the furnace of fire. There shall be wailing and gnashing of teeth."

It does seem that this parable would be more logically arranged if it had followed the second, or that of the tares. There Jesus spoke of the different characters that form the visible kingdom, and represented them as the good wheat and tares both growing together, and in such a manner as the destruction of the one would cause that of the other. Here he says the kingdom is like a dragnet—



for this is the true translation of the original, instead of just the one word “net”—that was cast into the sea, and gathered of every kind; that is, good and bad fishes. The kingdom of God here may be represented by the preached gospel; for this is the instrument with which we catch men, and that is cast into the sea, or the communion of sin, vice, and all manner of error. And the gospel is to be preached to all, the good and the bad; and it will be found to draw upon all, even as Jesus said, “And I, if I be lifted up, will draw all men unto me.” But while the gospel will influence all and gather in many truly converted and many not, but only such as say, Lord, Lord, it will only save those who do the will of God. And when it shall have been preached to every creature and made its final round, then it shall, with its fish (souls) of all kinds, be drawn to shore. And the angel reapers shall descend and thrust in their sickles, and separate the good and the bad, and place the good in vessels of reservation, and cast out the wicked into a lake of burning and unquenchable fire, where shall be wailing and gnashing of teeth. Thus ends the parabolic language of the—we might say—sea-beach. We have Jesus’s own words why he spoke in this manner; and now we dismiss the subject, and pass on to another.

#### SECTION A.—THE THREE FOLLOWERS.

Matt. viii, 18-22; Luke ix, 57-62.

Jesus is still on the plain of Gennesaret, where he was speaking the parables; and it is still the fall of the year. However, he is now on the border of leaving this spot, and three interesting and noticeable characters come to him and make propositions of discipleship, but with reservation. Luke alone, however, gives three, and Matthew two; therefore we shall go with Luke. Luke says, as they were going,

the scribe—as Matthew calls Luke’s “certain” man—said, “Lord, I will follow thee whithersoever thou goest.” This proposition is an application for discipleship. The scribe only speaks from first impulses. He has not counted up the cost of what it takes to make Christian disciples. He says, “I will follow thee anywhere,” but does not seem to realize that something more is required than mere following and professing Christ. Therefore Jesus calls his attention, in an indirect manner, to the duties and especially to the hardships of those who will become his followers. He says, “Foxes have holes, and birds of the air have nests; but the Son of man hath not where to lay his head.” But what could Jesus really mean by this language? Could he mean that there was really no place at all where he could lay his head for a night? Certainly, when it comes to earthly possession of homestead and its comforts, Jesus really meant that he had no place; for he who was rich became so poor that he was a wayfaring man. Not in Nazareth, nor Capernaum, did he own a home and its comforts. But Jesus did not only mean here to advertise his poverty, but to teach a lesson; namely, that, to become a disciple often requires deprivations of even the most necessary comforts; yet we must not go around them, if Jesus lead through them, but must follow.

But the second follower said, when Jesus bade him to come, “Lord, suffer me first to go and bury my father.” Jesus said unto him, “Let the dead bury their dead; but go thou and preach the kingdom of God.” Now it is to be observed that this man was called to the discipleship, while the first proposed himself to follow Jesus. This man made some hesitation, yet, from what Jesus commanded him, it seems that he went into the ministry. We can see here, then, the drawing of the Spirit—deliberation and obedience in the one, and spontaneous impulse in the other—which seems to amount to nothing after all. It is wis-

dom to count up the cost in religion, as well as in war; for the way to God is not strewn with flowers and velvety downs.

Again, we notice that this man had parental love and regard. He wanted to remain with and nurture his father till his death, and asked this much. But Jesus assured him that the work of saving sinners was more important than staying around his aged parents to care for them. Jesus did not, by any means, call upon him to forsake any duty to them; but the care of providing necessities for them could be carried on by him in his ministerial duties. Moreover, there were other children, probably, and neighbors, who did not care for the salvation of men, and were dead to all such Christian love and labor; and they could look after the decrepitude of the old man. Let them see him to the grave; but "Go thou, and preach the kingdom of God." How important is this language! What a lesson does Jesus here teach! Consider what inestimable value he attaches to the soul. Jesus teaches that the most honorable, even sacred, duties should not stand as barriers against the work of saving men. The work of salvation is imperative, and can not be delayed, else thousands will daily fall into hell.

"Rescue the perishing, care for the dying,  
Snatch them in pity from sin and the grave;  
Weep o'er the erring one, lift up the fallen,  
Tell them of Jesus, the mighty to save."

The third follower said, "Lord, I will follow thee; but let me first go and bid them farewell which are at my house." Jesus said unto him, "No man having put his hand to the plow, and looking back, is fit for the kingdom of God."

We are to observe that Luke only gives us this character. We do not know whether Jesus had called this

man especially to be a disciple and minister; for that is not brought out by Luke; yet it does seem that something had been said by our Lord on this line; and the man was considering the matter, and had about made up his mind to follow Jesus, but asked privilege to return home and make a formal parting and closing up of his business, and bidding adieu to his friends and loved ones. This was, indeed, a worthy request, and is not denounced by Jesus; but, as with the second follower, Jesus shows that the immediate work of salvation is more important than any earthly friendship or material possession.

Also Jesus called his attention to a great truth well, even now, to be remembered; namely, that a man called into the sacred ministry is only able to do that one work. He can not farm, plead law, practice medicine, do the work of a mechanic, and, with these professions, carry on the ministry; for he is looking back, hence is unfit for the kingdom of God. This would also say that a man can not serve two masters: the Lord Jesus and the devil and Satan; for while he tries to do double service, he makes himself unfit for one and unfit to enjoy the blessedness of the future world.

#### SECTION 14.—JESUS STILL THE TEMPEST.

Matt. viii, 23-27; Mark iv, 35-41; Luke viii, 23-25.

The fourteenth move of our Lord Jesus takes him from the plain of Gennesaret, famous for his parabolic discourses, to the other side of the sea. Jesus is through with his discourses of the boat and that of the three whom we chose to call followers; for they were followers of a kind, and, we hope, proved to be a right kind. It is late in the day when Jesus closes, and, the people being dismissed, he decided, with his disciples, to cross to the Gadarene, or east side, of the lake.

Jesus doubtless made this attempt to get rest, which was seen to be needed by his soundly sleeping on ship shortly after they started. However anxious Jesus was to get rid of the multitude for rest, there were several other ships following him to hear and witness his words and works. Their start was propitious and under flying colors of the multitude; and their journey was pleasant till one of those common and peculiar tempests swept down upon the waters of old Gennesaret. It was no ordinary tempest, but plentiful and violent; so much so that the waves ran high, and were dashed into the ship till it was filled with water, causing great jeopardy. Against the winds and waves, for a long time, the disciples rowed; but in spite of their efforts they only drifted, were all getting wet, and on the verge of losing, not only their ship, but all their lives; for they were far at sea.

They doubtless hated to awake the Master; for he was asleep, and the only man quiet and now unalarmed. Every other was frightened out of his wits. So they all gave up to perish; but "No," said the impetuous Peter, "I will go and awake Jesus; for I believe that he who can give sight, raise the dead, cast out devils, and do all we have seen Jesus do, can help us. Then John, James, Andrew, and all the rest, as a last resort, followed the leading one to Jesus now, in the hinder part of the ship, sleeping well on a pillow. They awoke Jesus, doubtless with loud and frightful voices, and asked him, "Master, carest thou not that we perish?" This was to say they had lost all hope, and now depended upon him for safety. This language and their calling upon him with unanimous voices show that they believed he could control the winds or take in hand the ship, and override the billows in safety to the shore. So by their request Jesus rose up and rebuked the wind, and said to the sea, "Peace, be still!" This was

enough; for even the unintelligent elements must not resist the power and mandates of their Creator. The wind ceased, and there was a great calm.

“He rides upon the stormy skies,  
And calms the roaring seas.”

Not only was there a lighter wind and easy sea, but a perfect cessation of wind and a smooth sea, as if nothing happened before.

“He plants his footsteps in the sea,  
And rides upon the storm.”

Then Jesus turned to his disciples, and asked them, “Why are ye so fearful? How is it that ye have no faith?” Here Jesus questions their timidity, and it is well that he does; for those disciples had seen his mighty works, and they had been convinced that Jesus was the Messiah; therefore they should have had no fears since Jesus was on board. They might not have thought his mere words could stop the winds and waves, but they might have believed, in some way, he could overcome the sea. He also accuses them of losing or weakening in faith. This was a lack of faith in his supernatural power to save. Thus Jesus continues to teach us the lesson that he who cometh, by sea or on land, to God must believe and exercise his faith. That faith is the instrument of salvation; hence it is indispensable.

This great act and miracle had an effect which was as follows: First, they all became afraid of Jesus. This was not only reverential, but more—they had just been slightly rebuked for having and using no faith, which was discrediting him. They had just awakened Jesus to do what a touch of his garment by them would have done, or a command from any of their lips, in his name, through faith. Again, they feared the presence of One so majestic and divine



when they thought of their frailties and ignorance of sin and mistakes. They were afraid to enter any questionings or controversy as to such marvelous displays of Divinity. So, secondly, they started among themselves to saying, "What manner of man is this, that even the wind and the sea obey him?" This Jesus was to them now God on sea and Master of winds and waves; therefore a nondescript. They could not define nor comprehend him who mastered the uncontrollable winds and dashing waves. This is one of the most peculiar miracles of Jesus, one which no impostor has ever been able to imitate by sorcery. Many of the miracles of Jesus were imposed upon by witchery; but we do not read of any man being able to deceive the people by pretending to calm seas or pacify waves. They do not attempt such, because there is no way to conceal their fraudulence, wherefore, in this, Jesus stands unique.

#### SECTION 15.—JESUS HEALS DEMONIACS.

Matt. viii, 28-34; ix, 1; Mark v, 1-20; Luke viii, 26-39.

It was now in the late fall of the year, and this move of Jesus, after the storm and calm of the sea, places him in the land of the Gadarenes. Matthew calls it the country of the Gergesenes, perhaps recognizing the city Gerasa in it more important; while Mark recognized Gadara, another city, more important, and called it the country of the Gadarenes. This country district was east of the Jordan and opposite Galilee. We have seen that the crossing was rough till Jesus wrought the miracle of the wind. And we claimed that Jesus doubtless took this trip for rest; for this was the only direction he could well go from Capernaum for rest; besides, there were none of his followers over there, as he had never been there, and none of his disciples, as far as we have any record; so this would seem an inviting field in which to get some rest or quiet, and also a chance to begin the message of salvation. How-

ever, the fame of Jesus had gone up the Jordan Valley, and caused the people to pass over into Galilee to hear him. This had spread, at least, considerable knowledge of him, and faith as to his miraculous powers. So, as soon as Jesus landed, instead of finding opportunity for rest, he was called upon to use his miraculous powers to effect an unusual cure of demoniacs. Jesus had cured demonized persons before this; but there was no such case thus far presented. But let us note the different statements here by the synoptical writers. Matthew says two men with demons met Jesus; while Mark and Luke say one. We think each writer knew of two, but the two latter only mention the one presenting the most interesting spectacle of devilry. These men presented the most alarming cases of diabolism for cure, since they were more abundantly affected. The demons had been in them a long time—had taken entire control of their minds and bodies. Their minds were demented, and their physical volitions were abnormal. They were driven into desperation, and made it dangerous for any man to pass that way. They quit the habits of men, and took up those of devils. They left their homes, and went to dwell in the tombs; and, when caught and brought back home and chained, they plucked the chains and broke the fetters, and returned to the tombs, in which, by night and day, they lay crying, and cutting their bodies with stones. They divested themselves of all their raiment, and went naked and wild; but, while these poor creatures were thus tormented, it was not their desire thus to remain. The bondage of the devil and sin was not desirable to them, though they had, doubtless, yielded to the temptations of the devil.

But anyway, these men came to Jesus for relief from such corruption and pollution. They came running, and fell at his feet, to worship and implore redemption. It was the moment of joy for the poor, undone wretches; for He

who could deliver, restore to social and mental life, could tame and save, had come. He came to save men, but to destroy the works of the devil; and these devils knew it. They knew Jesus as God in the flesh, and dreaded to meet him. So one of the devils cried out as the spokesman for many (for many were in them), "What have I to do with thee, Jesus, thou Son of the Most High God?" Of course, the devil used the man's mouth, and made the man say this. So we have another teaching here. It shows what unlimited sway the devil had over men before and up to the coming of Jesus, and that, if one admit the devil, he will use your members to ruin your soul and as instruments of his own defense; for the devil builds and perpetuates his works only through our members. The devils adjured Jesus by his Father to torment them not; but it was all through the man's vocal organs. This adjuration, however, took place because Jesus had decided to heal the men and cast out the devils. But the devils were the wrong agents to adjure the Son of God; for he came to destroy their works and to set at liberty those that were bruised; so he commanded the devils to come out of the men. Then Jesus inquired of the number of the den of devils dwelling in the men, and the name of the clan. He replied, "My name is legion; for we are many." Then the demon prayed, offering various petitions. Mark says he prayed much that Jesus should not send them away out of the country, nor into—Luke says—the deep sea. Then they made the positive petition, "Send us into the swine, that we may enter them;" for a great herd were feeding near.

So Jesus answered even the three prayers of the devils; yet he does it in such a way as to work to their ruin and dethronement from the hearts of the two men. He did not order them out of the country or into the deep, but did allow them, Luke says, to enter two thousand hogs, which

were so convulsed and tormented by the devils that the whole herd ran into the sea and were drowned. But here is a great thought of the exceeding sinfulness of sin. See two men enduring to contain many devils and their effects for a long time, and two thousand hogs could not for an hour. How much evil can the human heart carry? "It is deceitful above all things, and desperately wicked." Who now can doubt this statement? Then those who fed the swine went to tell about this, and they told it on their way and in the city; so all went out to see about these things. When they approached Jesus, they found him sitting, and the men by him, clothed and in their right mind. Then the disciples told how the man was cured and about the destruction of the herd.

It may be well to say right here that the morality of Jesus is, by some, involved on account of such a material loss of property as two thousand hogs by the devils. They say the expulsion of the devils by Jesus was the cause of this loss, and Jesus was the primary cause, hence morally base and guilty of wrong. The skeptic makes much of this as a means of downing Christianity. But there is no foundation for any such preposterous claims; for, in the first place, Jesus came to destroy the works of the devil, and was not restricted as to manners and ways to do this. Second, he did not, here, act for himself, but for man, more valuable than swine. Third, after all said, both Mark and Luke show that Jesus did not send the devils into the swine, but only allowed them to go, by their own request. Matthew shows the same thing; for, says he, they prayed for such, and Jesus said, Yes, "Go"—not sending, but permitting them to go; hence virtually Jesus had nothing to do with this hog-slaughtering. He only suffered it as a means to destroy sin, just as he suffered Joseph's brethren to sell him, that he might, through it, accomplish good for his race and the world.

The basest and most unwise thing of all was that the Gadarenes, instead of entertaining Jesus for what he had just done on sea and land, as the people of Sychar, in Samaria, when Jesus sat upon Jacob's Well during the previous year, they foolishly entreated him to even leave their country and side of the sea. So Jesus took them at their word, and left them to die and perish for that water and bread he had brought them. O how blind is man in sin! He can not taste nor see the goodness of God, hence is forever lost.

But not so with the poor men who had just been healed. They did not want Jesus to leave; but if he did, they purposed to go with him. They asked Jesus aboard ship to allow them to go with him. Ah! they would say, "Thou art too great a Benefactor to leave us. We have just been saved, and if thou leavest, we may be re-entered by the devils. O let us be with you! Our friends and homes have been as though they were not. We can not be missed in them; for we have not been, and could not stay in them. Let us go with thee. We would always see thy lovely face, hear thy mandatory voice ousting tormenting devils, and behold thy hand to heal. Let us go!" Howbeit, Jesus did not allow them to follow him who "had not where," he just before coming said, "to lay his head." No, they could accomplish no good by going with him back into Jewry, where he had demonstrated his powers and taught his doctrines; but they could do some good among their own kith and kin who knew their former condition. So Jesus sent them home, saying, "Go home to your friends, and tell them how great things the Lord hath done for you." And they took Jesus at his word, left the ship, and began to tell, not only at home, but in the entire Decapolis, what great things Jesus had done for them. And such a showing of redemption and tidings as they carried caused the people of the country to marvel.

SECTION 16.—JESUS RAISES JAIRUS'S DAUGHTER TO LIFE,  
MEANWHILE CURES A WOMAN.

Matt. ix, 18-26; Mark v, 21-43; Luke viii, 40-56.

We last were with Jesus in the country of the Gadarenes, where he healed two demoniacs, and failed to get a much-needed rest. But this lesson brings him back to the western shore of the Galilean sea and into Capernaum. Their return trip has been propitious, and not interrupted by one of those lake squalls which drove them going. Jesus was expected and eagerly awaited by many. Crowds watched the sea, and as soon as they saw his boat heave into sight they approached the probable landing. He finally landed, and they greeted him, and as he started off from the sea he did not get far up the street before a ruler of the synagogue, Jairus by name, came to him with broken heart of saddest grief, which was brought on by the illness of his beloved daughter. But this grief was intensified while he talked with Jesus; for the child was surely dying when he left, and it was to have death's pangs checked that he went to Jesus. But while he lay at Jesus' feet supplicating help in his bitter distress, some of his friends, just from his house, approached him and said, "Jairus, thy daughter is no more; is dead; why trouble the Master any further?" This was a thrust of agony and a sting of death to him. His heart then began to despair, and grief was multiplied. However, Jesus, who was and is ever nigh to all who are of a broken heart, spoke one word of reassurance and hope which cheered the heart of the suppliant. Jesus, on seeing him give down, said, "Be not afraid; only believe." This he said as a response to what had been said by the reporters of death. Then Jesus gathered up his steps, and started, with the ruler and a large crowd, home to the deathbed; for he who was the Son of God cared no more for death than he did the disease which was there. As Jesus went through the streets the crowd was augmented



at every corner. Here and there it could be heard, "The Great Teacher is going to raise to life the daughter of Jairus." This news increased the excitement and the throng. It was not long before the Master could not go at all, scarcely, through the throng and press of the people. This great rush and press of the people had a fruit.

#### SICK WOMAN TO BE HEALED.

And this was a blessed fruit of chance and Providence combined; for this poor woman was an invalid most tryingly and peculiarly affected. Her case was unlike anything that had ever been brought to Jesus. Her disease was of long standing; for it had been that of hemorrhage for twelve years. It was, virtually, slow and certain dying. It had baffled all medicines and medical skill, and only grew worse. It was incurable plague of both summer and winter, and rendered the poor woman unfit for social life. She did not even dare to present herself boldly to Jesus. No, she did not present enough boldness to send for him to come into her humble and defiled home. But she said, "The first time I get a chance I will slyly touch his garments; for I hear and believe that if you faithfully touch even the hem you will be healed." So when she saw Jesus passing with the ruler, Jairus, and so beset on every side that he could hardly go, and was often stopped, she said: "Now is my chance, and only time, perhaps, to ever get near enough to touch his robe without observation or offense. I will try." So she ventured into the crowd unnoticed, and pressed her way windingly to Jesus, who had, doubtless, halted to speak or have the pass opened. She got in arm's reach, just as if she only wanted to look at him, and passed her hand quietly by the bodies near him, and touched his floating garment. This was enough. Her faith did the work. She was not deceived, and met not with disappointment. Her hope was fruition and realiza-

tion, for immediately the fountain of blood of twelve years' standing was dried up, and she felt as sound as ever.

Then Jesus, who knew that virtue had gone out of him, turned about in the crowd, and asked (only to carry a point; for he was aware of all the woman's transaction before this), "Who touched me?" His disciples, represented by Peter, said, "Thou seest the multitude thronging thee, and sayest thou, Who touched me?"

The disciples talked thus because they did not know the great blessing just wrought before their eyes. How often God is working in our midst his redemptive salvation when we least expect it! Then Jesus looked around to see the recipient, who was happy. And when he fastened his eyes upon the woman, she, knowing what she had done and what it had resulted in, feared, and came and fell down before Jesus, and told him why she touched him, why she did not do it openly, how long she had been thus suffering, and the blessed result of the touch.

She doubtless expected a rebuke for not asking this Physician some questions, and offering, as in every other case, some remuneration. She looked for a scolding for putting her hands about Jesus in the streets before perfidious men, so begged forgiveness for her act. Nevertheless, it gave her new life and joy. But see how tender and far from rebuke was Jesus. He did not question her act at all, but in the most fatherly way toward a base, penitent daughter, he spoke and said, "Daughter, thy faith hath made thee whole; go in peace, and be whole of thy plague."

"Blessed Jesus,  
Thou hast loved us, thine we are."

### JESUS RESUMES HIS JOURNEY.

Jesus, after curing the woman, renews his march to the bed of death and the house of mourning; for by this time the ruler's house had been filled up with friends and

those who mourned. But Jesus does not carry on the great crowd any further, but stops them, to be accompanied by none save Peter, James, and John, the three trusty witnesses. Finally, Jesus reached the house of Jairus, and saw the many visitors and heard the wailing. So he entered death's gloomy home, and the first thing he said was, "Why make ye this ado, and weep? The damsel is not dead, but sleepeth." This was simply ridiculous language to those not mourners, and foolish to them; so "they laughed him to scorn." And Jesus requested that all go out-doors; for they were only there to make sport and laugh at the power and Word of God. When all were out, Jesus took Jairus and his wife and the three chosen disciples, and entered the room where the child was lying still in death; and her twelve-year-old body was emaciated and the soul had taken its flight. Jesus took her by the hand, and said, "Damsel, I say unto thee, Arise." And at once the girl got up and walked, and the people were greatly astonished. Then Jesus ordered her a meal to restore her emaciated form, and prove that she was really both raised from death and disease. This is the second case of actually raising up those who were dead. The first was southwest of here, at Nain, the widow's son. And we note that in both cases Jesus touches and calls back the fleeing spirits, which shows that he was not afraid of the ceremonial uncleanness of the dead. Thus we also see that Jesus had the power of both death and life.

#### SECTION A.—JESUS HEALS TWO BLIND MEN AND CASTS OUT DUMB SPIRITS.

Matt. ix, 27-34.

Jesus was still in the city limits of Capernaum when these three cases were presented for cure. We are indebted to Matthew alone for the cases which we have. And it would seem that the Savior was on the go from the house

of Jairus when these men came to him. And if these men did hail Jesus on the way from the house of the ruler, it must be that he was on his way to the home of Peter, which was his home; and this was the third actual miracle he was called upon to work before he could get to his room after landing.

These men were blind, and hence their cases were very miserable. They, like most blind people, were paupers, and in the streets, probably, to beg for charities. They had heard of Jesus, and learned that he was the Messiah who was to come. So when they, sitting together, heard that he was going to pass, decided to ask him for sight; and because they believed him the Christ, they addressed him as the Son of David, and prayed for mercy. This they did to gain the attention of Jesus; for they knew him to be very sympathetic and friendly toward the distressed. However, Jesus passed on, doubtless to his room; for he had not been home since returning. And the blind men followed Jesus to the house. There Jesus asked them, to draw out their faith, as he only works by faith, "Do ye believe that I am able to do what you desire?" They said, "Yea, Lord." Then Jesus touched their eyes, saying, "According to your faith be it unto you."

We are to observe that Jesus knows our wants and needs before putting them forth in words. These men wanted sight, and that is what they sought; but not directly, but indirectly. They prayed, "Have mercy on us," and both mercy and sight came.

Prayer sometimes sends only one petition, and brings back a shower of blessings. Their eyes, on account of their faith, were opened, and Jesus charged them to tell no man about it. This charge points out the greatness of the character of Jesus, who sought no reputation for himself, but worked always to honor the Father. He did nothing by his power to magnify himself; but was always

trying to hide his works, except as they were needed to demonstrate his Divinity. He rather chose the form and place of a servant in all his doings and walks. But his works were always so good and genuine that those blessed by them could not hide them, but had to proclaim his loving kindness everywhere.

#### A DUMB MAN HEALED OF DUMBNESS.

When those who witnessed the cure of the blind men went out, they saw a man with a devil, which had paralyzed the man's tongue so that he could not speak. It is remarkable how many ways the devil did affect men. There were cases of dumbness, of blindness, and many other disorders of men's bodies. In this case the man was physically and morally affected. He had let Satan enter his moral habits, and when he had converted the man's heart into his diabolic throne, he took some step that brought on the man's physical and vocal infirmity. But, for the sake of those who brought the dumb man, devil-possessed, Jesus cast out the dumb devil and saved the man whole. And when the devil was cast out, the man began to talk, which was a proof of the miracle; for prior to this he could not utter a word. And because he did talk, the crowd marveled, and said, "It was never so seen in Israel."

## CHAPTER VI.

BEGINS THE THIRD YEAR OF OUR LORD'S PUBLIC LIFE.

SECTION 1.—JESUS RETURNS TO NAZARETH AND IS A  
SECOND TIME REJECTED.

Matt. xiii, 53-58; Mark vi, 1-6.

WE have now reached the third and last full year, and the most interesting year of our Lord's public life. It was winter, and the year A. D. 29 opened up with Jesus again at Nazareth. We last had him, in the late fall, at Capernaum, and his last work there was to cure two men of blindness and to cast out a dumb devil.

Jesus now enters upon his third missionary tour of Galilee. It would seem that he starts at Nazareth, where he opened up his ministerial labors about nine months previously, and where he was brought up. He was accompanied, at this time, by his disciples, and, as usual, on the Sabbath-day he went into the synagogue to teach. It is well to note that nearly all of the discourses of Jesus were didactic. He taught the people, and did not harangue them. He enlightened their minds, and caused them to understand his will and doctrines. Would that more of this kind of preaching were carried on to-day! Would that less noise and more essential lightning of truth were uttered! Would that there were more ministerial workmen that need not be ashamed, rightly dividing truth from



error! The teaching of Jesus here, as everywhere else, was so eloquently profound that the people were astonished, and what puzzled them mostly was that they knew Jesus from boyhood, and that he had never sat at the feet of any of the distinguished rabbis at Jerusalem. So they asked: "Whence hath this Man these things? and what wisdom is this which is given unto him that even such mighty works are wrought by his hands? Is not this the Carpenter, the Son of Mary, the brother of James, and Joses, and of Juda, and Simon? and are not his sisters here with us?" Those foolish people of old Nazareth had nothing in them but prejudice and stupidity; for they had no need to ask such questions, since Jesus, less than a year before, had stood up in the same building and told them, indirectly through the Prophet Isaiah, that he was the Messiah, who knew all things. Besides, they had the Scriptures, that told them all about the coming Christ, and Jesus, the "Carpenter," as they called him, had, up to this time, fulfilled all the Divinely-inspired prophecies; hence they were left without excuse as to his knowledge and power.

But again, if they had not had the Oracles of God, as the Gentiles, and if Jesus had not told them before that the Prophet Isaiah meant him, they had, as many believing Gentiles, the works of Jesus to prove him the Son of God and the Messiah; hence they were still inexcusable.

The questions of the Nazarites regarding the professional life and family connections of Jesus point out nothing less than prejudice. Just because Jesus was the man whom they knew to have carried a hammer and saw around Nazareth during sixteen or seventeen years, to build houses, repair fences, and the like; yea, because he was the son of a poor, and, at this time, widow woman, called Mary, and brother to four others living there and of no special mention; besides, to two or three sisters humble in social rank, they would not accept any suggestion to receive him as

their Messiah. But what a grand lesson is here taught! It is not what the man seems, but what he is. We should always look beneath a man's dress and below his words. Find out what he thinks and acts. These people had the world's Redeemer; but because he did not do as they wished, and because he was of humble parentage and formerly made a living by honest toil, they refused his only salvation. See what prejudice and envy will do! Jesus would teach you, here, to keep them out of your heart. Jesus also teaches here that, while people will slight and fail to appreciate their own countrymen and townsmen as prophets, this is not the best policy, is not wisdom. The man who is from afar, and is jubilantly received, and causes the old, friendly prophet to be laid aside, brings just the same humanity and failings as the old one, and often more. But Jesus was the perfect Man, and yet he was rejected twice here at home. This will further show that it is more prejudice that rejects the home prophet than faults. It also shows that the minister who meets discouragements, without fault on his part, is in the footsteps of Jesus. It must not be forgotten that Jesus was not only rejected by the disbelieving Nazarites, but also by his own brothers and relatives, who envied him as a successful Great Teacher. Those four boys, the brothers of Jesus by Mary, would doubtless walk right around Nazareth and speak as slightly and disparagingly of Jesus as any one else. The rejection of Jesus at this time, as before, was so blatant that he could not do any mighty works in his own former home and for his former townsmen. He was utterly repulsed. He, then, only went about the streets and to a few homes and cured some sick ones. This rejection of Jesus, after nine months to reflect over their first mean treatment, to take him out of Nazareth to kill him, and after two years of public works, such as teaching everywhere, healing, curing all kinds of diseases, and actually raising the dead, was very

painful. He could do no more, and really did marvel at the hardness of their hearts; and he left them to visit other towns and villages of Galilee.

## SECTION 2.—JESUS COMMISSIONS HIS TWELVE APOSTLES.

Matt. ix, 35-38, and x and xi, 1; Mark vi, 6-13; Luke ix, 1-6.

Prior to this time, Jesus has had his disciples to accompany him, but now comes in a new departure, in that he sends them unto the "lost sheep of the house of Israel" to preach, saying, "The kingdom of heaven is at hand." Jesus is still in Galilee with them, but just where he and his disciples are when this commission is given we are not told. The most noted remarks are caught by Matthew, though Mark and Luke both give account of the mission. Jesus has only about sixteen more months to live; and since he had kept the Twelve with him, teaching and nursing them hitherto, and since the work is abundant before him, he now calls upon them to go out alone and help establish the new kingdom. He looked upon the multitudes as perishing for spiritual food, and scattered as sheep shepherdless. The traditionalism of the Pharisees and futile teaching of the times only beclouded men's minds, and failed to give nourishment of spiritual food. Therefore Jesus said to his disciples, "The harvest truly is plentous, but the laborers are few. Pray ye therefore the Lord of the harvest that he will send forth laborers into his harvest."

Now, when Jesus prepared them spiritually and intellectually to go out and preach the new doctrine, he gave them the credentials of Divine power, to be used in his name. This power was against unclean spirits, to cast them out and to heal all manner of diseases. This power was necessary for the apostles, to show that they were Divinely sent; for they were to meet with all kinds of tests and opposition, and, if not able to meet the demands made

upon them, their cause would go down, and they would be discredited. But since Jesus knew just what was before them, he prepared and warned them. The men sent on this occasion were Peter, Andrew, James, John, Philip, Bartholomew, Thomas, Matthew, James the Second, Lebbeus, Simon, and Judas. These twelve men were destined to become, through election to the apostleship and appointment of Jesus the Christ, the immortal dozen. Their names are called and characters studied, even to-day, more than any individuals that live. Kingdoms, empires, and republics have owned great men and great organizations, and these have died and become as though they were not; yet the cabinet and kingdom of Jesus stand to-day, affecting the whole earth. While the names of the Babylonian, Egyptian, Roman, and Grecian official cabinets have perished, the names of the twelve apostles stand; and they will never be unwritten.

These twelve men were sent, on this first mission, only among the Jews. It was the duty of the Savior to begin his charities at home and among his own people, and this he did; for "salvation is of the Jews." Jesus, however, did not, by any means, intend to confine salvation to the Jews; for it was his eternal purpose in coming into the world to save all his creation, both the Abrahamic and Gentile seed. But this act of Jesus was temporary discretion; for had he, at this time, gone from the Jews, they would have had a cloak for their sins; but he remained among them even to the death, thus removing every shadow of an excuse.

The burden of their mission was the kingdom of heaven at hand. This was the saving message. Nothing else could save men and satisfy their longings. These men were not to preach science and new learning, except that learning was of the new kingdom, and was intended to lift men up to God.

They were to heal as physicians of the body as well as the soul. This medical effectiveness must have been of incalculable assistance to them; for these men became, not ordinary, but extraordinary physicians on this occasion; they could heal any disease. They could take hold, as their Master, the incurable and ceremonially unclean lepers and heal them. They were to raise to life the dead, and cast out devils. All of these extraordinary powers also were to be exerted free of cost. These disciples paid Jesus nothing to become so able; therefore they were not allowed to charge their fellow-men. But for their services and time among men they were to exact food, raiment, and lodging; "for the workman is worthy of his meat."

Jesus also gives some precautionary remarks as to their progress. He says, "When ye enter a city or town, inquire who in it is worthy;" that is, ask for my followers, and go with them as guides while there. "And salute the houses ye enter;" that is, make known your mission, and if it is accepted, preach there the kingdom; but if your message is rejected, resume your peaceful mission, shaking off the dust of that yard or city. And he states that, "I send you forth as sheep among wolves;" therefore, cautions the more, that they be as "wise as serpents and as harmless as doves;" that is, careful to do nothing or speak nothing that would bring them into any difficulty. Jesus warns that they be watchful of men; for the reason that they would deliver them to the councils, and scourge them, and bring them before rulers for his sake. But he tells them not to fear kings and earthly rulers when before them, nor think premeditatively of what they should say there; for he would, through the Holy Spirit, give them the words to speak at the proper time. Jesus makes a step further, and points out not only the treachery of men, but even brother should deliver brother, the father the child, and children their parents, and would cause their death. Further, he shows

them, as his apostles, that all unbelievers would hate them, and their hardships would be severe; but if they endure all these they should be saved. He tells them to do what he had done often; namely, to leave a place where they were persecuted for another. He then points out that there would be plenty of cities to employ their time till his final victory over his enemies in death, in his resurrection and ascension. For I believe this is what he meant by, "Ye shall not have gone over the cities of Israel till the Son of man be come." Some would make this mean his coming to the destruction of the Jews by the Romans; but this meaning is self-destructive; for it was more than forty years before this occurred; and twelve men could have gone over the Israelitish cities repeatedly in this time the way they itinerated.

Jesus further points out that, as his disciples only, they must expect the bad, in deeds and words; for they had gone so far as to pronounce him Beelzebub; and if such an extent had been reached in wicked daring toward him, they might expect worse. However, they were to be fearless and uncover every sin, even at the hazard of their own lives; for those who kill the body can do no more; therefore, are not dreadful like God, who destroys soul and body.

Jesus points out the almost worthlessness of the sparrows, and yet shows that they are especially looked after by Providence; which assures us he would look for them in distresses. He points out that the providential care was so minutely put forth toward them that their very hairs did not sightlessly perish. And Jesus gave them this encouraging thought to say to their hearers, "Whosoever therefore shall confess me before men, him will I confess also before my Father which is in heaven."

Now, Jesus is prepared to tell them the nature of his mission, and they to the people. That he was not in the world to take away confusion, but to introduce its instru-



ment, the sword. He was here to set men, even related, at variance; so that a man's foes would be found in his house. Of course, this is the fruit of Christian righteousness against unrighteousness. Then Jesus shows the necessity of this sword or variance; that men would have to persist in doing right over wrong, if that wrong is in parent or child, friend or foe. The love for Christ must lead over the head of every opposer, and be supreme. His righteousness, as a cross, must be assumed and carried, disregarding all the demands of this life and all its agents; for if a man seek this life, he must lose the coming one.

Jesus finally closes this commission by pointing out that they, his apostles, were not to be accounted as doing their own work, but that of their Lord; and their rejections and discouragements were his and the Father's. And they stood behind them to reward every man who received them as prophets, as righteous men, or whosoever gave them even a drink of water in his name.

#### SECTION A.—JESUS PREACHING IN GALILEE, MEANWHILE JOHN IS BEHEADED.

Matt. xiv, 1-12; Mark vi, 14-29; Luke ix, 7-9.

We only pause here to make mention of John's death, as his relations were so intimate with those of Jesus. This good man and herald of Jesus was arrested and jailed about eight months prior to this time. He was arrested because he preached against the adulterous life of Herod Antipas living with his brother's wife. He was put into prison at Macherus, and spent many gloomy hours there. He even once began to doubt Jesus, whom he baptized, testified of, and had pointed out to him by the Father's voice and visible appearance of the Spiritual Dove. Yet, Jesus removed his doubts by miracles and signs. But John was a noble character; for he chose to lie in this prison quite a year, and die as a martyr, rather than retract the truth.

Would that we had more Johns. Would that we had more men who would denounce sin, in high character as well as in low. John's hours, however, were made more gloomy one day when Herod's natal day returned. This was a high day, in which many of the officials of Herod came to banquet with him. And, to add pleasure to merriment, the daughter of Herodias was called out to dance; and this she did so charmingly that Herod, in his revelries, promised her anything she would ask; and this promise was made with an oath. But the silly girl knew not what best to ask; so she went to her wicked and murderous-hearted mother to know what to include in her petition. This afforded a mother's opportunity, such as seldom comes to women for blessing and benefiting their children. But, alas! Herodias plays the slave to prejudice and malice. She throws away a chance to have her daughter even enriched to gratify her hatred. For, instead of asking for wealth, by which she might have lived and cultivated her daughter, the first thing she said or thought of was, "The head of John the Baptist." This must have been a very undesirable task for Herod to carry out; it certainly seemed a very foolish request to his lords and magnates for a frenzied mother to make. Nevertheless, for the oath's sake, he sent an executioner down into the dismal cell, and there he bound John's hands and feet, and unceremoniously cut off the head of John in the absence of all his friends. This head was laid, bleeding, upon a dish, and carried to the girl, who in turn carried it to her mother. But what good did this do either mother or daughter? The answer is, None. The lesson is, "Avenge not yourselves; for vengeance is mine, saith the Lord of hosts." The further lesson is, "That we shall reap what we sow." This very girl was herself put to death in a very brutal manner. "What measure ye mete, it shall be measured to you again" is this lesson carried out. When the mother had finished giving vent to her murderous passions she allowed the head, containing

the tongue that had reproved her, go with the body; and John's disciples took up his body and buried it. Thus ended the greatest of the prophets, and a faithful martyr.

SECTION 3.—JESUS AT CAPERNAUM. HE RECEIVES THE  
TWELVE.

Mark vi, 30; Luke ix, 10.

Jesus was doubtless in Galilee when John was put to death, and he and his disciples were having great success; so much so that the news of his successful movements reached Herod, who thought Jesus was John risen from the dead. So Herod was very anxious to see Jesus, so as to be sure whether or not he was John. He knew he had done a cowardly, mean act to have a good man killed, and conscience had worried him both day and night; and he thought, if John was risen, it would only in some way add to his already tortured guilt. But it was Jesus, preaching to the poor, healing all kinds of sickness, casting out devils and unclean spirits. And this did Jesus in all the visited cities and towns. But after John's death, Jesus returned to Capernaum, for the same reasons he left Judea for Galilee when John was first arrested. His work was abundant, and time short; therefore he needed to avoid all impediments to his freedom of action; therefore he went into the Roman province, and remained until early summer. We find him first at Capernaum, where he spent the remaining part of the winter; but his disciples were still doing missionary work in the cities and towns of Galilee. And about April they returned to Capernaum, and told Jesus all their experiences in the work of teaching and doing. Their stories must have been interesting and exciting, for they had been out as no set of men ever went. They had miraculous powers, and were in the capacities of several professional men. Their works were certainly successful, and were talked about by the highest and lowest.

## SECTION 4.—JESUS CROSSES THE SEA OF GALILEE AND FEEDS FIVE THOUSAND.

Matt. xiv. 13-21; Mark vi. 31-44; Luke ix. 10-17; John vi. 1-15.

We have now reached the springtime, as we noticed in the last division, and this fourth move of the third year brings Jesus out of Capernaum to the sea; and this he and his disciples crossed to the northeastern shore, and landed about Bethsaida Julias. It is well to keep in mind that there was also a town of this same name on the northwestern shore, and just below Capernaum. Jesus took his disciples over here immediately after they came in from their Galilean tour, that they might get rest in the country parts of Bethsaida. These disciples had been out on a three months' preaching tour, and they had visited many villages and cities, preaching both day and night; and, as we have seen, had made profound impressions; and their fame had reached from the humblest to the highest. And so, when they returned to Capernaum, they could not find time even to eat, much less rest; so Jesus carried them off for a much needed rest, and to have an opportunity to instruct them further. But, after all, there was not much opportunity, as over in Gadara, for rest or teaching; for the crowds, amounting to thousands, from every shore village, came out to meet Jesus when they heard of his coming, and were on the shore waiting for him when he landed. Since no house would hold the multitudes, they went after Jesus out in the suburbs, and, John would say, upon a mountain—by which we understand elevated land, perhaps hillsides of grassy lawn. Jesus, however, went thither for the sake of his disciples, and the crowds followed him. But when Jesus saw the people as shepherdless sheep, he was moved with compassion towards them, and began first, as was his custom, to teach them. And his teaching was enlarged, and took on greater proportions than he started to do. Finally, he had discussed many subjects, and the

time had thoughtlessly slipped away. Matthew says it was evening, and Mark says the day was far spent when he ceased to teach. Then his disciples came and said, "Teacher, the day is about gone, and we are here in the woods where there is nothing to feed these people whom you have detained till this late hour; send them away now, that they may go into the near villages for supper and lodging." But Jesus made a very surprising reply to them. He said, "You give them something to eat." Philip, one of the twelve, said to Jesus, "Two hundred pennyworth of bread is not sufficient that all may have just a little." Then Jesus asked: "How many loaves have ye? Go and see." Andrew went to see, and reported that a lad had five barley loaves and two little fishes; and he asked, after reporting, "But what are they among so many?" This, from a human and experimental point, was a reasonable question; for these were nothing for such a multitude, except by the creating hand of God. However, Jesus, who is never impoverished, and who had kept the people there till late, could not think of sending them away hungry and subject to fainting by the way as they went. He simply said, "Make the men sit down," not telling his mind. He also ordered them in companies of fifties and hundreds, in order to count them more easily. Then he took the loaves and fishes, and looked up to heaven, the source whence all good flows; and he blessed the food and gave, as yet unincreased, to the disciples, and they gave the same to the companies—the food increasing all the while—so that the disciples had no lack or cause to ask for more. And all the five thousand men ate to satisfaction; and Matthew says there were women and children, also, to eat. These were not so numerous, as most of the crowd was from varying distances, over which women and children could not so well reach. Those there were from the nearest parts. And after every one was fully fed, Jesus said unto his disciples, "Go now, and

gather up all the fragments, that nothing be lost." And when the disciples were through, they had twelve baskets full of the loaves and fishes, which were so few and small in the beginning. So the men who had eaten and seen the supernatural act were convinced, and said, "This is of a truth that prophet that should come into the world."

#### SECTION 5.—JESUS WALKING ON THE SEA.

Matt. xiv, 22-33; Mark vi, 45-52; John vi, 16-21.

The stupendous miracle of feeding five thousand men, besides women and children, ended late in the day. Then drew on the night; therefore, Jesus said to his disciples, "You go enter the ship for crossing, while I send the multitude away." It may be that the disciples thought he would come onto the ship as soon as the people were dismissed, or that he would remain over till further orders. Anyway, they were ready to obey his orders, and asked no questions; for it was about dark already. They were ordered across toward Capernaum—Mark says to Bethsaida. Jesus ordered his disciples away very early, and especially when it is pointedly stated that he took them to the desert for rest. But the reason for this is explained by John. He says, "Jesus perceived that they would come and take him by force to make him a king."

Jesus was a King, and had the government upon his shoulders, and asked no further royalty of men. They wanted him to establish a human kingdom, and the thoughts of a sovereign with such power and wisdom were enchanting. The multitudes were carried away with the idea of having a ruler that could cure all infirmities, raise the dead, conquer their enemies, and feed the hungry by a mere act of his will. When Jesus perceived the wishes of the politicians, and had got off his disciples and the multitude, he went into the hills to pray, and remained there to a late hour of the night. Mark seems to say, till the fourth watch,



or later than our three o'clock at night. And John says, till the disciples had rowed twenty-five or thirty furlongs. Thus, we judge his prayer was prolonged, and was doubtless to be able to meet the great demands just before him. Jesus always taught the lesson of prayer for special and daily duties. And he usually prayed alone, and, if practicable, in some far-away place.

His disciples, knowing or not knowing his plans, went away, determined to land either at Capernaum or Bethsaida; but they had not gone far before a fierce and contrary wind set in against them, and drove them backward all the while. The winds proved, to say the least, entirely too much for them. They made no progress, but always regress. The early hours passed, and the late ones came; still they were only tugging and drifting farther away, till thirty furlongs had been reached; and thus were gone their night's rest, their strength, their patience, and they became wholly discouraged.

We find some beautiful lessons here. We noted that Jesus went up into a mountain to pray after he had sent away his disciples to sea. But we must not suppose Jesus only went up to pray, but also to be able to look over the sea the first seven or eight hours, and watch his disciples, who he knew would be tossed on the waves. These angry winds and waves were, then, a lesson to those disciples, and to us. They said to them, You are now sent off alone into the sea of toil and labor; they represent the oppositions, the toils, hardships, and discouragements ye are to meet when you are sent upon the spiritual sea by your heavenly Master, who will be gone away. And we further learn that Jesus, who never sleeps nor slumbers, was watching these tired men. So he watches us still in our trials, to help us successfully combat them. And when these men at sea were overcome, failing, and discouraged, Jesus showed up to help them. He does so still, in all the trials of his

people. He came to them late, but he came in time. He is often late in answering prayer, but always early enough to meet the righteous demands of life. No doubt these disciples wished many a time during these long hours of struggle for their Master, who, about six months prior to this night, had only spoke to the same sea, and it became still. O yes, they had prayed in their hearts, "Would my Lord were here!" These anxious desires went out and found him, though not audible. And they were not audible, for Jesus was not present, as before, and sleeping on a pillow. But Jesus does not ask audible prayer, neither verbal petitions; but the earnest desire of the heart beseeches him; for—

"Prayer is the soul's sincere desire,  
Uttered or unexpressed;  
The motion of a hidden fire  
That trembles in the breast."

So, without the consciousness of these men, they had prayed Jesus near, to take hold where they turned loose and gave up in despair. And this is God's way. He comes only when man has gone as far as he can go, doing right. And many are disappointed in prayer, by expecting God to do what they can do themselves.

At the specified time, Jesus went to his disciples, walking on the sea. They all saw him, and he walked, at first, as though he would pass them; and their first thoughts and decisions were, "That's a spirit." And they all were troubled; for the whole East was full of superstition regarding spiritualities. They did not know but that this supposed ghost had risen now to put an end to them in the absence of their Master. When Jesus knew their fears, he quickly spoke familiarly and lovingly to them, saying, "Be of good cheer; it is I; be not afraid."

Now for the impetuous Peter, who wants conviction that it is his Lord, and the peculiar experience of being a sea-

walker. He cries out, "Lord, if it be thou, bid me come unto thee on the water." This request points out two things: First, faith that Jesus could save him; and second, a good deal of intrepidity to step out upon the dashing billows which they all could not resist with oars.

Anyway, faith or no hope, Jesus said to Peter, "Come." And Peter accordingly stepped out at once, and walked on the water to reach Jesus. But when he saw the wind boisterous he became frightened, and, beginning to sink, he cried, "Lord, save me!" Immediately, Jesus caught him, and said, "O thou of little faith, wherefore didst thou doubt?" This cry of Peter, which received a slight rebuke, did show but little faith. Jesus does not say "no faith," but "little." Peter did have enough to get out of his ship, and enough to call on his Lord to save him. But when Peter saw his Lord standing, and found that he had walked some distance, he should not have lost faith, but increased; and because he did not, his Lord chastised him. However, they entered the ship, and the winds ceased, and the men worshiped Jesus.

#### SECTION 6.—JESUS HEALS MANY.

This sixth move of Jesus in his third year brings him off the sea, where he appeared upon the water to help his disciples. They landed at Gennesaret. Jesus was wholly unable to get any rest for either himself or his disciples. The efforts toward that end met with failure over the sea, where he was called upon to feed thousands. There were only labor and toil at sea on their return. And as soon as they reached the western side the people sent out over all the country about and brought in the sick, that Jesus might heal them. And they prayed that his garments only might be touched for healing, and all who touched his garments were healed. But we have no special mention of any diseases, for the cures were many, and doubtless undefinable. Thus ends the short stay at Gennesaret.

## SECTION 7.—JESUS DISCOURSES IN THE SYNAGOGUE.

John vi, 22-71.

It is now late in the springtime, and it is to be observed that Jesus did not attend the Passover this year at Jerusalem as usual; but this may be accounted for by his many duties for humanity and of preaching and teaching, and to avoid the prejudice in Judea against him. This sixth move brings him from Gennesaret to Capernaum again; and there Jesus met seeking him many of those people whom he fed across the sea in the desert. They had sought him beyond the sea, as they knew his disciples left him; they did not know that he came off the land and walked upon the sea by night to leave them, and when they found him in Capernaum they asked, "Rabbi, when camest thou hither?" Jesus who was never egotistic, did not tell them how he came or when. Said nothing about walking off from their side on the sea waters and rescuing his disciples or saving Peter on the deep; but rather calls their attention to the eating motive which brought them to seek him. "Ye seek me because ye did eat the loaves and were filled." Then Jesus pointed out a higher and better motive for seeking him. He said: "Labor not for the meat which perisheth, but for that meat which endureth unto everlasting life, which the Son of man shall give unto you; for him hath God the Father sealed." Then the people felt the keenness of this gentle rebuke; and chagrined by the exposure of their eating motives, made some expression of willingness to do more than eat; and asked, "What must we do to work the works of God?" Jesus replied, "The work of God is, believe on him whom he hath sent." Then they asked for a sign of faith and of work on his part, that they might believe. They referred to the fathers who ate manna of God in the wilderness. These people, however, had no cloak to hide their eating motive, nor reason to ask a sign or work to give them faith, for Jesus had performed the great miracle of

grouping the largest number to eat at once ever heard of by man; and over five thousand ate of two fishes and five loaves. What more work was needed, or sign, to cause people to believe on the Son? Jesus also showed them that while they held up Moses as their great leader and provider, yet he did not give them the true bread from heaven as the Father did, and shows that he was that bread for the world; then they asked, "Evermore give us this bread." Jesus then called himself the living bread, and said he that cometh to him shall eat and never hunger nor thirst. A similar claim Jesus made to the Samaritan woman at Jacob's Well, when there the subject was water; and he called himself the water of life. Jesus then told them that they had seen him, but believed not; yet he would get all his Father gave him, for if they would not come the Gentiles would, and whosoever came would be received.

Then he showed that he came to earth to do the will of his Father; and the Father's will is, that he raise up all given to him; and this Jesus promised to do. Then the Jews, Pharisees, murmured because Jesus called himself living bread from heaven. Of course, the spiritually blind can never see the mysteries of God, and the spiritual prejudice of the Jews would never let them see him as he was. They asked, "Is not this the son of Joseph, whose father and mother we know? how is it that he saith, I came down from heaven?" But Jesus said to them, "Murmur not among yourselves. No man can come to me except the Father which hath sent me draw him: and I will raise him up at the last day. It is written in the prophets, And they shall be all taught of God. Every man therefore that hath heard, and hath learned of the Father, cometh unto me. Not that any man hath seen the Father, save he which is of God. Verily, I say unto you, he that believeth on me hath everlasting life. Your fathers did eat manna in the wilderness, and are dead. This is the bread which cometh down from

heaven, that a man may eat thereof, and not die." Then Jesus showed that the bread he spoke of was his flesh, which was to give life to the world. But this language was still a mystery to the Jews, and they strove among themselves, asking, "How can this man give us his flesh to eat?" Yet Jesus assures them that "Except they eat his flesh and drink his blood, they could have no life in them;" his flesh and blood were meat and drink indeed. And this eating and drinking brought Christ into them and they into him to dwell and live by him.

While Jesus talked on over these mysteries some of his believers also murmured at him. Jesus had many Judases. They said of the remark just uttered, "This is a hard saying; who can hear it?" Jesus asked them, "Doth this offend you? What and if ye shall see the Son of man ascend where he was before? It is the spirit that quickeneth; the flesh profiteth nothing: the words that I speak unto you, they are spirit and they are life." Jesus gives here the spiritual understanding of his parabolic language. He had talked of the bread of life, and interpreted that as being his body; and said his body and blood must be eaten and drunk as sustenance of life; but this language gave such offense to his real enemies that some of his shaky followers were ready to join the enemy; but to retain the discipleship, he explained that the literal body and blood did not effect what he claimed, but the spirit and his words of eternal life were the spirit that quickens and saves.

Poor Judas was there to get his part and take his offense; but, as we said, there were others like him, or even worse, for Judas followed Jesus to the end, while some there went back on Jesus, never to follow again. When Jesus saw their breaking off discipleship, he turned to the twelve and asked, "Will ye also go away?" Peter replied for all, "Lord, to whom shall we go? Thou hast the words of eternal life. And we believe and are sure that thou art



that Christ, the Son of the living God." Then right on the heel of such a confession as Peter made, Jesus makes a most humiliating but true statement of one, yet unnamed, of those twelve for whom Peter made such a strong plea. Jesus asked, "Have not I chosen you twelve?" Then states without apology, "One of you is a devil." Judas at this time had no knowledge that Jesus meant him, nor a mind to do the atrocious deed, yet near a year off; but there was the devilish principle in him. Jesus said one of you is a devil, not will become one. This gave Judas a timely warning to guard his actions toward Jesus and all other men; hence his crime could have been avoided had he chosen it to be.

#### JESUS CONTINUES HIS DISCOURSE.

Matt. xv, 1-20; Mark vii, 1-23.

Whether the discourse of Jesus here treated was delivered in the synagogue as the above, and at the same time, we can not certainly determine. The Savior began to speak to the people who followed him for the loaves, and then to the Jews, and wound up with his disciples. John alone, however, gives us the above discourse. But this remaining discourse began with scribes and Pharisees from Jerusalem; and it would seem that it was not in connection with the above, neither in the synagogue, but perhaps on the street or in some private house. But the subject was traditional observances; and the remarks had their origin in the disciples failing to wash their hands before eating, as the ceremonial law and observances of the Jews required. Jesus did not indorse any moral uncleanness; but knowing there was no guilt or moral merit in hand and cup washing every time one turned around, did not require his disciples to keep the formal traditionary laws. So these Jerusalem spies asked Jesus, "Why walk not thy disciples according to the tradition of the elders, but eat bread with unwashen hands?"

Then Jesus referred them to the Prophet Isaiah, who said, "This people honoreth me with their lips, but their heart is far from me." This was a true prophecy of them; pretending religious reverence by bodily washings, while their hearts and secret lives were wholly godless. They taught for doctrine of Divine instruction the commandments of men; and laid aside God's laws, to do what the elders said. Jesus then recited an instance. He said, "Moses said, Honor thy father and thy mother; and whosoever curseth father or mother, let him die the death. But ye say, If a man shall say to his father or mother, It is a gift, by whatsoever thou mightest be profited by me, he shall be free. And ye suffer him no more to do aught for his father or mother." Here is a plain case of laying aside the Divine law through traditional teaching. And Jesus said they were guilty of many such errors; yet they complained of his disciples for minor offenses, and such as were not culpable at all.

Then Jesus called the people unto him and said openly to all, "There is nothing from without a man entering into him can defile him; but the things which come out of him, those are they that defile the man."

When Jesus had made this open statement he entered the house; and his disciples, represented by Peter, asked his explanation of the remark. Jesus simply called their attention to the fact that it is not meats, but evil that enters and defiles; that nothing defiles save that which enters the heart; that meats go into the belly only, and pass out into the draught. While on the other hand, the things which come out are what defile; for from the heart proceed evil thoughts, adulteries, fornications, murders, thefts, covetousness, wickedness, deceit, lasciviousness, an evil eye, blasphemy, pride, foolishness. The most that can be said of the Pharisees is what Jesus said, "They be blind leaders of the blind." And all who follow them fall into the ditch.

## SECTION 8.—JESUS HEALS THE DAUGHTER OF A SYRO-PHENICIAN WOMAN.

Matt. xv, 21-28; Mark vii, 24-30.

We have now reached early summer of this year. And this seventh move brings Jesus away from Capernaum, in a northwesterly direction, into the coasts of Tyre and Sidon, which were on the Mediterranean Sea. Whether Jesus really entered these cities, or either, is questionable. It is very probable he did not. He could go into their coasts or borders without entering them.

It would seem that Jesus only took this seemingly long trip to acquire rest for himself and his disciples. We have seen how they have always, on every attempt prior to this, failed to get any rest. We have just followed Jesus from Capernaum and the desert of Bethsaida, where he took his disciples for rest, but were engaged by the hungry thousands. And when he reached Capernaum they followed him; and also his enemies, as a deputation from Jerusalem, annoyed him. So as it was impossible to get rest and an opportunity for teaching his disciples anywhere he had been, Jesus decided to go to the regions about Tyre and Sidon. These two places are mentioned together, as Jesus must have fallen between them, and as they were near each other.

But did Jesus get the desired rest here? It seems that he met with a great opportunity, for he spent at least two months or three, during which we have but little record of activities. But while Jesus was in this region there was one case to tax his patience and seek his help. It was, Matthew says, a woman of Canaan; meaning that she was a descendant of the Canaanites referred to in Judges i, 32. But Mark calls her a Greek; this she was by race. He calls her a Syrophenician, because of the country in which she dwelt. Anyway, this woman was a Gentile, and it was the condition of her daughter that distressed her. Her daughter, she said to Jesus, was grievously vexed with a devil. She

left her house and followed after Jesus, crying out loudly, "Have mercy on me, O Lord, thou Son of David!" For some while Jesus seemed to pay no attention to this woman's distress; and because he seemed so indifferent to the cries of this Gentile woman, his disciples grew vexed, and said, beseechingly, "Send her away, for she crieth after us."

Jesus had here a double opportunity, and he used it. The first was to test the faith and draw out the importunity of the woman. He makes it every man's duty to ask, seek, and knock for what is needed. Second, he had an opportunity to teach his Jewish disciples that he was not deaf to the cries of Gentiles, and had mercy and grace for them too, if they are but importunate. However, before he acts for a Gentile, to make his mission more impressive, he restates it thus, "I am not sent but unto the lost sheep of the house of Israel." But just here, where this mission is declared, the poor woman prays, "Lord, help me." This prayer is remarkable. First, it is sympathetic; it is for her child, whom she considers herself in whom was the devil. Her child's sufferings were hers. This points out the duty of mutual and sympathetic prayer. Second, this prayer is short and importunate. It strikes Jesus through and through, and teaches the value of earnest asking and seeking. Third, this prayer is made in the proper spirit. The woman is humble and feels helpless. She prays evidently upon her knees, or in prostration.

But while Jesus hears her prayer and considers her humility, he draws a little more upon the cords of her faith by saying, "It is not meet to take the children's bread and cast it to dogs." This remark was quite a test; yet the woman stood it. She knew the meaning of Jesus, that the Gentiles were the dogs and the Jews the children. But all for that she hesitated not, for she wanted her daughter healed; and she was willing to be considered anything for the sake of his favor. She replied with anxious heart: "Truth, Lord;

yet the dogs eat of the crumbs which fall from their master's table." Such faithful words from the mouth of one of God's creatures, Gentile or Jew, were more than Jesus could stand to turn off. He was deeply touched and thoroughly wrought up, and immediately replied: "O woman, great is thy faith: be it unto thee even as thou wilt. For this saying go thy way; the devil is gone out of thy daughter." And when she was come to her house, she found, as Jesus said, the devil gone out, and her daughter laid upon the bed.

#### SECTION 9.—JESUS HEALS A DEAF AND DUMB MAN AND OTHERS.

Matt. xv, 29-31; Mark vii, 31-37.

Just how long Jesus remained in the coasts of Tyre and Sidon we have no way to determine. But this eighth move brings him into the district of Decapolis, east of the Jordan. A few words of this Decapolis will not be untimely, as it is frequently mentioned in religious and other writings. It is said immediately after the conquest of Syria by the Romans ten cities appeared to have been rebuilt, partly colonized, and endowed with peculiar privileges; and hence the country around them was called Decapolis. But the limits of the territory were not very clearly defined. This seems the reason why ancient geographers spoke so indefinitely of the province, and disagree as to the names of the ten cities. However, these ten cities were situated principally in the neighborhood of the sea of Gennesaret, near the eastern side of the Jordan. Pliny enumerates them thus, Damascus, Philadelphia, Raphana, Scythopolis, Gadara, Hippos, Dion, Pela, Gerasa, and Canatha. Of course, there are others who mention others; but the principal ones are here. This district lay south and southeast of the sea as far as the river Jabbok, and north to the city of Damascus. Somewhere in this province Jesus reappeared. Matthew says, on a mountain where the usual multitudes of the seacoasts came unto

him bringing their lame, blind, dumb, maimed, and many others, that Jesus might heal them. But there was one especially pointed out by Mark as having an impediment in his speech; perhaps stuttered so much that he could not talk; he was also deaf; him they prayed Jesus to touch, that these ailments might cease. Accordingly, Jesus took this man aside and put his fingers into his ears, and spat upon the ground, and touched his tongue; and looking up to heaven he sighed and said to the man, "Be open;" and at once his ears heard and his tongue-strings were loosed and he talked. This, with other cures, elicited praise from the multitudes. But the act of Jesus in taking that man aside, and acting as he otherwise did, were acts more to arouse a faith and expectation in the man, than simply to get out of the crowd, or work any deception. Jesus could have performed the acts in the face of all, or without putting himself to the trouble to go aside and work in his ears and upon his tongue.

#### SECTION A.—JESUS FEEDS FOUR THOUSAND.

Matt. xv, 32-39; Mark viii, 1-10.

We are still in Decapolis, and in the summer season of this year. And the multitude that came out to meet Jesus with their sick were not dismissed by him like those of Bethsaida Julias, but remained with him at least three days. For this reason Jesus was unwilling to send them off hungry, for many came far to meet him. But while Jesus was not willing to dismiss them hungry, he had to shoulder the responsibility of feeding them. His disciples did not once entertain any such idea. They asked Jesus, when he spoke of feeding the multitude, "Whence can a man satisfy these men with bread here in the wilderness?" Then Jesus, as before, asked, "What did they have to eat?" And when he learned that they had seven loaves and a few little fishes, he commanded that they should sit down on the ground.



And he took the loaves and fishes and gave thanks, and gave the broken loaves to the disciples, and they to the people. And the people ate to the full; and when through they took up seven baskets full of what was left. And this amount was left from feeding four thousand men, besides women and children, who were numerous also.

This is the second miracle of feeding multitudes on bread and fishes. Both miracles were in the neighborhood of the Sea of Galilee; one in the northeast section about Bethsaida Julias, and the other in the southeast section; but just where, no one knows. They were not far apart in time; one about early April, and the other in midsummer. They were both beyond the sea from Capernaum, and for the same cause—to relieve unavoidable hunger and suffering. They were both before the eyes of all the disciples, and all the Gospels mention the first one; but only Matthew and Mark speak of the second one. The great acts were certainly miraculous, because there were too many to be deceived by Jesus had there been any collusion. The two miracles certainly point out the tender mercies of Jesus yearning toward those who come to him for help. Also his great providential care towards men. He will look out for those who call upon him; and as he feeds the sparrow, adorns the lily, and clothes the grass, he will more abundantly supply all man's needs when he depends on him. And when Jesus finished feeding the multitude, he took ship and crossed to the west side, landing at, Mark says, Dalmanutha; but Matthew says at Magdala. But what is the harmony? It is that Dalmanutha was a town on the west side near Magdala. Magdala stood near the shore, at the southern end of the little plain of Gennesaret, while Dalmanutha was situated farther west, yet very near to Magdala; and it also received a visit of Jesus at this time.

## SECTION 10.—JESUS ANNOYED BY PHARISEES.

Matt. xvi, 1-4; Mark viii, 11, 12.

We last saw Jesus about or in the towns of Magdala and Dalmanutha; but his stay was very brief, as he did nothing more than pass through their streets and went on to Capernaum, his own home, or headquarters. When he reached there the Pharisees, as usual, came forth and began to question him. But their questions were never to learn of truth and salvation, but always of an entrapping nature. They only sought a cure of curiosity, or to get some words to use against Jesus. At this time they sought of Jesus a sign from heaven; this they did to tempt him. But Jesus never used his powers except it was to do men good, either physically or spiritually; hence he was not prepared to do any work for these Pharisees; but sighed deeply in spirit, and asked, "Why doth this generation seek after a sign?"

This question and spiritual sighing were prompted by this evil-hearted people seeking the unnecessary things, and leaving off their only salvation, which was about to get away from them. It is even true to-day, that men are seeking after that which is not bread, and spending their labor for that which satisfieth not. How many more would be saved if they would only seek Christ and his righteousness, and let all other things be added! Jesus said to the seekers after signs only, "There shall no sign be given unto this generation." However, Matthew says Jesus did call their attention to their own heavenly signs. This Jesus did to show them how little they needed even what they asked. They asked signs from heaven, and yet had them. He wanted them, therefore, to seek signs that would do them some good and offer them salvation. One of their signs was that red sky in the evening gave fair weather; and the same, with lowering clouds in the morning, gave foul weather.

Then Jesus reproved them that they would discern the

face of the sky, and not of the great signs of the times; doubtless referring to the many wonderful works and signs he was doing to attest his Messiahship, which they were rejecting to die eternally.

Jesus had called them hypocrites; and now he characterizes them "adulterous," and declares that to them no sign should be given but that of Jonah. We note that Jesus does not point out how Jonah was a sign, as he did to the Pharisees in this same city quite a year before, when the Pharisees blasphemed against the Holy Ghost and sought signs. (Matt. xii, 24-45; Mark iii, 22-30.) Truly the Pharisees were nothing but hypocrites and annoyers. Jesus would never have taken up any time to reply to them had they not been the great Judaic Church party, whose influence was very considerable. But every time Jesus met them he mowed them down as the sharpest blade, and made them objects of contempt.

#### SECTION 11.—THE LEAVEN OF THE PHARISEES.

Matt. xvi, 5-12; Mark viii, 13-21.

This eleventh move carries Jesus out of Capernaum, and places him on sea with his disciples rowing along from Capernaum toward Bethsaida Julias. Whenever Jesus was on sea with his disciples, unless they happened to be passengers, the disciples did the rowing; and this necessarily took up their time and attention; hence Jesus was usually quiet and resting. Hence this trip only furnishes us a short conversation of Jesus with his disciples regarding the leaven of the Pharisees. When they left Capernaum they forgot to carry along sufficient food for a specified time, and when eating-time came they had none. This doubtless started up a conversation of some considerable words among them. They very naturally expected also some word from Jesus in regard to this unthought-of matter of interest. They may

have expected a slight reproof, or him to open up some way to relieve the embarrassment. But, as usual, Jesus began to talk of the more important matters of a spiritual concern. He first began by saying, "Take heed and beware of the leaven of the Pharisees and Sadducees." The disciples did not understand him in his remarks, and reasoned with one another, saying, "This he says, because we forgot to take bread." But Jesus was aware of their reasoning, and said, "O ye of little faith, why reason ye among yourselves, because ye have brought no bread?" Then Jesus called their attention to the miraculous feeding of the five and the four thousands to remind them of the provision made for them to eat, and to assure them that the same power was still among them. Jesus would say: "Ye need not worry over the temporal food; for your Heavenly Father will look out for that. It is the interests of the soul that should give you reasonings and concern." Then he finally asked them, "How is it that ye do not understand that I spake not concerning bread for the body, but rather of the doctrine of the Pharisees and of Herod?" But why Jesus should caution the disciples now about the doctrines of the Pharisees and of Herod, is a matter of surmise. I think, however, it was because he was now in, and would spend some time in, Herod's domain, and would be continually meeting the two leading Jewish sects named on inimical terms. And considerate attention on the part of the disciples would prepare them against the attacks upon them by the Pharisees.

#### SECTION 12.—JESUS HEALS A BLIND MAN.

Mark viii, 22-76.

We have Jesus again at Bethsaida Julias, where six months prior he fed the five thousand. Just what his mission over here this time was is not told nor known. The first and last trip was to seek rest for his weary disciples.

This may now be his reason for crossing thither. At any rate, we see while there the friends of a blind man brought him to Jesus for a cure. However, this fact is mentioned by Mark only; while all four of the Gospels mentioned the occurrences of the first trip. The people prayed Jesus to touch the blind man, being convinced that a mere touch of his powerful hand would do the work of restoring sight. Jesus did not begin his work upon the man immediately, but sought time to draw out his faith. So he took the man by the hand, and led him out of town. Then he spat on the man's eyes, and placed his hands upon him. These acts of Jesus were simply put forth to stimulate the man's faith in him, and to make him expectant of what had been sought for him. And when Jesus had played upon the man's faith and touched his eyes, he asked him if he saw anything. The man replied, "I see men as trees walking." By this reply we infer that this man had a knowledge of the appearance of trees. This knowledge was in one of three ways. First, he was not born blind, and had seen trees. Second, he had often descriptions of trees made to him, and he had the power of reproduction at sight, if he had never seen them. Third, he was born blind, and had never seen a tree, but only heard of them, and imagined men were like them before he could clearly see. Then Jesus again touched his eyes as before, and the man's sight was fully restored. This is Mark's way of putting it; and this language is very much in favor of our first proposition; that he was not born blind, but had, through some cause, lost his sight, which was now brought back, and not given. When this man was made to see clearly, Jesus charged him to go home and not tell of the occurrence in the town. This charge was made to avoid the throng. Doubtless, as before, Jesus went here for some quiet and rest; but should it have been proclaimed he was about and healing, all rest would have been banished.

## SECTION 13.—JESUS REVISITS JERUSALEM AND THE FEAST OF TABERNACLES. HIS DISCOURSE THERE.

John vii, 2-53.

The thirteenth move of Jesus during this third year brings him to Jerusalem. We know the time was during the latter part of our September and first half of our October, answering to the Jewish month Tisri (1 Kings viii, 2), for Jesus went to the Feast of Tabernacles. It was the plowing and sowing season. As Jesus went to this feast, and as it is the first instance recorded of him attending the Feast of Tabernacles, a few remarks concerning this feast will be appropriate. It was celebrated on the fifteenth day of the month Tisri. And this month was the seventh of the ecclesiastical, and first of the Jewish civil year. This feast took its name from the tents which were erected about the temple, in public places, in courts, and on flat-top houses, and in gardens. In these tents the Jews dwelt eight days, in commemoration of the forty years during which their fathers dwelt in the wilderness. It was one of the three annual feasts, in which all the males were obliged by the law to appear at Jerusalem. In celebrating this feast, all the people would cut down branches of palm trees, willows, and myrtles, which they tied together and carried with them all day, took them into the synagogues, and kept them while at prayers. It was to this feast, and through some such services, Jesus went and took part in during his whole life, for he was patriotic as well as Divine, and came not to destroy the law, but to fulfill all righteousness.

When Jesus set out for Jerusalem, it was without doubt from Capernaum, though we have no account of his return thither. But we infer he set out from Capernaum; first, because it was his headquarters, and he was northeast of it when at Bethsaida Julias, and Capernaum was between him and Jerusalem. We infer this, secondly, because some



of his relatives urged him to go into Judea to show himself as a mighty worker, and these relatives doubtless were in Capernaum. We note that his brothers wanted him to go to Jerusalem, more to show himself a worker of miracles than anything else. They felt worldly in their ambitions, and thought Jesus should so feel and act. Though they were his own relatives, they did not believe in Jesus; yet they thought if he were true and proved a great deliverer, or merited any honors, they ought to have been merited among the high-class Pharisees and Sadducees, and from Jerusalem. They doubtless wanted to rush Jesus before the Judean Jews as those who were most noted; and if he could stand the test of their criticisms, and should finally win them and make for himself a great name, this honor would be reflected upon the entire family of Jesus. The brothers of Jesus, moreover, felt that Jesus had done quite all of his mighty works among the incredulous Galileans living in towns, country, and villages, and after two years they could not reward nor honor him in a worldly sense; and that the prestige of Jesus would only wane unless he would get among the educated and worldly honoring at Jerusalem. So they went to Jesus in a half-hearted and unbelieving manner, and said: "Depart and go into Judea, that thy disciples also may see the works that thou doest. If thou do these things [claimed] show thyself unto the world." This very language shows that these relatives of Jesus doubted and were envious of him. They remarked, "If thou do," showing that they believed not, "show thyself to the world." This shows that they did not recognize the people who had followed Jesus by thousands to be healed, raised to life, and dispossessed of devils. They failed to give credence to these, because they were mostly Galileans, and the work of Jesus among them was repudiated by the Pharisees of Jerusalem. Jesus replied to them and their worldly motives by saying: "My time is not yet come;

but your time is always ready." Just what time Jesus refers to here is a question over which many are divided. I believe Jesus means only the time when he should suffer; and not that his present duties prevented his being ready, while those of his brothers did not at the time hinder them from going to the feast. For Jesus, in the next expression, brings out the Jewish hatred to him, which was, as he knew, to result in his death. And since his work was not done his time had not come; and as at all other times he would avoid the hatred and persecution of his enemies, by either staying away or by going up to Jerusalem secretly. Then Jesus pointed out the reason for Jewish hatred. It was that he testified that their works were evil. However, Jesus told his brothers to go, and by no means absent themselves on his account; but he remained for a few days where he was. When his brothers reached the city and Jesus was missed, it raised quite a Jewish comment, for they looked for Jesus. They inquired about him, and others testified that he was a good man, while some called him a deceiver.

About the third or fourth day of the feast Jesus appeared in Jerusalem teaching in the temple. What special doctrines of the new kingdom he discussed we know not; but whatever they were, they were so wisely handled that the Jews marveled at such wisdom in Jesus, knowing he had never attended school. But Jesus very readily pointed out the source of his wisdom—it was the Father, God. And he declared that if any man will do the will of God, the same shall know of the doctrine and wisdom displayed. By Jesus proclaiming the doctrine he set forth, he proved the highest sincerity, and showed what he further said was true; that he sought not his own glory, but that of the Father.

Jesus then accused the Pharisees of lawlessness and efforts to murder him. This second accusation his enemies denied, and asserted that Jesus was possessed by a devil who prompted him to thus accuse them. But Jesus sus-

tained his accusation by saying: "Moses gave them circumcision, and they circumcised on Sabbath days; yet they opposed him because he at the second Passover healed an impotent man on the Sabbath; and they carried their opposition into deadly attempts upon his life. This was stinging talk to the Pharisees; and especially so since Jesus was exposing generally what they had plotted secretly. It was clear to common sense that it was as legal to heal a sick sufferer on the Sabbath, as to circumcise a child if the time fell on a Sabbath day; and this was all that Jesus insisted upon.

Then some who were citizens of Jerusalem, and did not know Jesus, asked: "Is not this he whom they seek to kill? Do the rulers know indeed that this is the very Christ?" These are two very important questions. The first exposed the wicked plotting of the enemies of Jesus, and also points out the conviction that the people had that Jesus was Divine. The second question is unequivocal, in that it comes right out, pronouncing Jesus the Christ, and is expressive of surprise that the rulers are inconsiderate and raise any opposition to him. But the persisting enemy said, "We know whence this man is" (meaning Nazareth of Galilee), "but when Christ cometh, no man knoweth whence he is." This is false language, simply uttered to mislead into prejudice; for the town and mother of Jesus were known by prophecy, even before Christ was born. And when Herod the Great demanded of the Jews where Christ should be born, they very readily reported to him, "In Bethlehem of Judea," and there he was born. Hence Jesus stood up on this very occasion, and, grieved at such wicked denials, "cried, saying, Ye both know me, and ye know whence I am." Then Jesus further claimed not only to be sent by the Father, but to know him; and because he made such claim his hardened and yet unconvinced enemies sought to arrest him; but his "time," mentioned to his brethren,

was not come. However strong the persecutions against Jesus, his visit was not in vain; for many believed on him for his doctrine and work's sake, and asked, "When Christ cometh" (if he is yet to come) "will he do more miracles than these which this man hath done?" This was strong questioning in Jesus' favor; but for the very reason the people were growing in faith, the Pharisees were worried; and they made another effort by sending officers to arrest Jesus. But when Jesus began to talk of his mysterious departure, with many other things, and in a way so divine, the officers had to stop to listen to this matchless speaker, instead of arresting him.

Then came the last and great feast day, when Jesus again stood and cried out, "If any man thirst, let him come unto me, and drink. He that believeth on me, as the Scripture hath said, out of his belly shall flow rivers of living water." Of course, the language of Jesus here is purely spiritual in its application. This was an opportune time for Jesus to speak of his spiritual drinks; for the thousands who came to the feasts, but especially on the last day, would suffer more on Jerusalem's hilly streets than on any other occasion; and the man who just mentioned water could get all the auditors he could address. When Jesus had talked to the hearers of the spiritual waters, some said, "Truly this is the Prophet;" doubtless referring to the Prophet mentioned by Moses (Deut. xviii. 15), whom they erroneously distinguished from the Christ. Others said, "This is the Christ." But there were others who asked, "Shall Christ come out of Galilee? Hath not the Scripture said, That Christ cometh of the seed of David, and out of the town of Bethlehem, where David was?" But these very questions show how stupid and ignorant these questioners were. Christ was not of Nazareth and Galilee by birth, but was of the seed of David and of Bethlehem. So the different views of Christ, and all of them wrong, led to a division of

the people, and caused his enemies to make capital of the division as a ground for his arrest. About this time the officers who were sent by the priests and Pharisees returned to them without Jesus, which raised the question, Why not? The officers replied, "Never man spake like this man." Then the Pharisees asked the officers were they too deceived; meaning, had they gotten faith in Jesus as the Christ. And to discourage any faith in him, they asked the officers, "Have any of the rulers or of the Pharisees believed on him?" Then, by way of comment, they said, "But this people are cursed, knowing not the law." At this juncture the secret disciple of Jesus, Nicodemus, asked, "Doth our law judge any man before it hear him and know what he doeth?" Then replied the compeers of Nicodemus, "Art thou also of Galilee?" meaning, Do you believe on Jesus, the despised Nazarene and Galilean? These two names carried with them contemptuous derision, therefore, thrown at Nicodemus. But Nicodemus was a man who would pick up a diamond if it were in the mud, for it is just as pure there as in the velvet case; so with Jesus, in his estimation. This Jesus had never been tried, and Nicodemus was not willing to pass a sentence condemnatory till Jesus was heard.

The compeers of Nicodemus said, "Search and look, for out of Galilee ariseth no prophet." Then, informally, the meeting broke up and every man went home, with Jesus still at large.

#### SECTION A.—THE ADULTEROUS WOMAN, HER ACCUSERS AND JESUS. HIS DISCOURSE.

John viii.

Jesus is still in Jerusalem; but a late afternoon and night have passed since the previous chapter, and the Sanhedrin Council was broken up in session because Nicodemus ventured to question its actions on account of Jesus.



This evening and night were spent doubtless with Mary, Martha, and Lazarus at Bethany. When the night was passed, and Jesus had breakfasted, he returned to Jerusalem, and began to teach in the temple, as was his custom. During his remarks, or before he began to speak, the scribes and Pharisees brought a women before him accused of adultery, and caught in the very act. This act, on the part of these parties, was everything but genteel. They had the law in their hands and were the law executors. They had no need to bring her to Jesus, who had no legal powers or right to say what should be done with any criminals. They had no need thus to expose an overtaken woman in the courts of the holy place when the Roman authorities were present to decide all such cases, as well as their own council. They only brought her before Jesus to get a judgment from him, in order to use it against him, either ecclesiastically or civilly. They were not really after the woman, nor were they anxious to rid the land of fornication; it was to entrap Jesus that they came. They came in the usual garb of Pharisaic hypocrisy, and addressed Jesus as Master or Teacher. Then they recited the law of Moses (Lev. xx, 10; Deut. xxii, 22), and asked Jesus, "What sayest thou?" Jesus had told them what he had to say, "That he came not to destroy the law;" hence, their question was useless. Since it was useless, and only to ensnare, Jesus made no reply, but stooped down and began to write, or scratch the ground, to avoid a reply, and as though he did not hear them. But when they pressed their questions, he lifted up himself and said, "He that is without sin among you, let him first cast a stone at her." By this remark, Jesus would say, He that is not guilty of the same sin that you accuse her of, let him be the first man to stone her, as this is legal. Then he stooped down again to write and not be a witness to the terrible ordeal through which a poor woman would pass, under stones, into death.



But, alas! no one of all that brought her to be sentenced for adultery was free himself of the same crime; and when their consciences looked them in the face and lashed them, every man, beginning with the eldest, who should have been innocent if any, was whipped away, leaving only the woman and Jesus. When Jesus arose, and saw no one but the woman, he said, "Woman, where are those, thine accusers? Hath no man condemned thee?" She said, "No man, Lord." And Jesus said unto her, "Neither do I condemn thee; go, and sin no more." It must be observed that Jesus did not censure those men bringing the woman's sins out, or even carrying out the law in her case. The woman was a guilty sinner, and Jesus had no approval for her; but he had a forgiving heart, and a heart too generous to see a woman publicly scandalized by a set of adulterers under the garbs of sanctity, and not pull them off. So Jesus took steps to uncloak the adulterers before he said anything. And when the wicked accusers and unworthy witnesses were all gone, Jesus spoke to the woman. His words to her are not to be taken as not condemning the woman's crime. What Jesus meant to say was that he had no legal sentence to pronounce upon her. It was for that purpose she had been brought; but as her accusers were unworthy witnesses there could be no trial; so Jesus could not act as judge, seeing he had no court. He did, however, pass a moral sentence, such as he passes every day, when he told her to not be guilty of such an act any more.

But this defeat of the enemies of Jesus and of the accusers of the woman gave Jesus a most excellent opportunity to proclaim himself, what he really was, "The Light of the world." He was the Revealer of moral information and Teacher of spiritual truth. And he gives light unto all who follow him. When Jesus proclaimed himself the Light of the world, his enemies tried to make the point

that he bore witness of himself; hence his testimony was false. But Jesus assured them that he had a higher testimony than himself; that his testimony had Divine sanction. Then he pointed out the weakness of their judgment that it was according only to fleshly appearance, and no further. His testimony, backed by the Father, was incontrovertible by their own law. (Deut. xvii, 6; xix, 15.) Then they asked for his Father who bore him witness; but Jesus pointed to the fact that they knew not him, nor hence the Father; for if they had known him they would have known the Father. Of course, Jesus spoke these things mystically, showing that he and the Father were one; and any discovery of the one is a discovery of the other. Then Jesus spoke of his departure by death, and of their eternal destruction, because they would willfully reject him. The enemy asked, "Will he kill himself?" Jesus showed that he would return whence he came, and that they in their sins would never be able to follow him. Then they asked, not as before, "Who is thy Father?" but "Who art thou?" Jesus replied, "Even the same that I said unto you in the beginning." Then he continued, "I have many things to say and to judge of you; but he that sent me is true, and I speak to the world those things which I have heard of him." The enemy had no spiritual knowledge of the Father; hence, Jesus continued, "When ye have lifted up the Son of man, then shall ye know that I am he, and that I do nothing of myself." Jesus was conscious that he had the approving presence of the Father; and he was sure of this presence, because he did always the things to please the Father. And when Jesus proclaimed that he always pleased the Father, many believed he spoke the truth; and believed, therefore, in him. Then Jesus said to those who did believe: "If ye continue in my word, ye are my disciples indeed. And ye shall know the truth, and the truth shall make you free." Here, as usual, the Pharisees misunderstood the spiritual

utterances of Jesus, and thought he was talking of natural servitude. They boasted, "We be Abraham's seed, and were never in bondage to any man; how sayest thou, Ye shall be made free?" These Pharisees surely took Jesus to be a great ignoramus, or they were such, of the Jewish bondage; or they willfully spoke a falsehood in saying, "We were never in bondage." But Jesus assured them that he was speaking of spiritual bondage, that entwines every man that commits sin. Then Jesus declared that he, as the Son, abides ever with his believers; and whom he sets free from sin, is free indeed. Jesus conceded that they were Abrahamic; but at the same time he accused them of murderous intentions toward him, and that was only because his word found no place in them. Jesus claims a knowledge and the word of the Father, God. The Jews claimed Abraham as their father; but Jesus pointed out that if they were Abraham's children they would do his deeds, and not as they were doing; for they were seeking to kill him for the truth's sake. Jesus further told them they did the deeds of their father—meaning the devil; but here, as usual, they failed spiritually to understand him, and claimed that God was their Father. But Jesus replied, "O, no; if God were your Father, ye would love me; for I proceeded forth and came from God; neither came I of myself, but he sent me." Then Jesus came out plainly, and said: "Ye are of your father, the devil, and the lusts of your father ye will do. He was a murderer from the beginning, and abode not in the truth, because there is no truth in him. When he speaketh a lie, he speaketh of his own; for he is a liar, and the father of it. And because I tell you the truth, ye believe me not. Which of you convinceth me of sin? And if I say the truth, why do ye not believe me? He that is of God heareth God's words; ye therefore hear them not, because ye are not of God."

Then the enemy found a new epithet which had never

been applied to Jesus; they called him a Samaritan. By this title, they meant to say, a person was low, unworthy, and untrusty. But Jesus made no rash reply for this epithet, but rather spoke on in his usual passions. He said, "I have not a devil; but I honor my Father, and ye dishonor me." When Jesus had made this remark, he made another more startling; viz., "If a man keep my saying, he shall never see death." But the Jews misunderstood him again, and thought they had caught Jesus in a desirable trap. They said: "Now we know that thou hast a devil. Abraham is dead, and the prophets; and thou sayest, If a man keep my sayings, he shall never taste of death. Art thou greater than our father Abraham, which is dead? And the prophets are dead; whom makest thou thyself?" Then Jesus replied, "If I honor myself, my honor is nothing," showing that his honor is of the Father. Then Jesus points out existence for himself before Abraham. He says, "Abraham was glad to see my day, and rejoiced." The Jews thought Jesus meant seeing and being seen by Abraham, naturally; but Jesus meant in some spiritual way. And, in a spiritual way, Abraham did see his day, and was saved by faith of his coming. Then, because Jesus claimed pre-existence over Abraham, his enemies wanted to kill him by stoning, and would have perhaps done so if Jesus had not so mysteriously passed out of the temple.

#### SECTION B.—JESUS HEALS A MAN BORN BLIND.

John ix, 1-38.

Jesus is still at Jerusalem. When Jesus left the temple, under threats of the enemy to mob him, it is most reasonable to believe that he went to some quiet lodging for the time. And the language of John here, "And as Jesus passed by he saw a man, which was blind from his birth," is not to be taken, I think, in the sense that Jesus per-

formed the miracle of giving sight to the man during his flight from the mob, but after things had quieted down, and Jesus had again entered the streets. It was perhaps on Saturday, as this miracle occurred on the Sabbath. It is said, "as Jesus passed by;" the blind man is here meant as the object passed. It was customary to place blind and other afflicted people out upon the thoroughfares to beg for their necessities; this is why this man was upon the street. And the attention of Jesus seemed to have been called to him by the disciples. They asked, in accordance with Jewish teaching that special judgments of God rested upon men for certain known or secret sins, "Master, who did sin, this man or his parents, that he was born blind?" But Jesus corrected the erroneous impression they had by telling them it was not that the man had sinned, nor his parents, that he was thus born; but it was to furnish a ground for the manifestation of the glory of God. This is not to say that God willed or brought about this affliction; but rather, he permitted it, as an unnatural result, and brought forth his glory upon it. This blindness was, as all other ailments, the result of being heir of sinful flesh; but no special judgment was in its mission. Jesus further remarked to his disciples that he was here to do a special work, and that he had a limited time of life to do all such work; and meantime to enlighten the world. Then he began to work on his patient by spitting on the ground, stirring up the saliva and dirt, and besmearing it over the man's eyes. Then Jesus said, "Go, wash in the pool of Siloam." The man went, washed, and came seeing. But why Jesus did not say to his eyes, "Be open," and not have gone to the seeming unpleasant duty of spitting upon earth and besmearing the man's eyes with it? First, Jesus wished to play upon the man's faith, and create an expectation in him of something to be done; second, he wished to use the grit and stiff clay first literally to cover his eyelids,

and thus aid in banishing all doubt as to the certainty of the cure. Jesus certainly did not need to use the two elements to help effect a cure, for their tendency was rather to hinder it; so the two were used very much as Elijah used water over the altar and sacrifices. When the man came seeing, it raised quite an interest in all who both knew and thought they knew him. And when the man owned that he was the original blind beggar, they asked him, "How were thine eyes opened?" It must be observed that they do not ask, "How was thy sight restored?" for he was born sightless; and they observed that his eyelids had been unsealed and his eyeballs quickened or created so as to possess sight. The blind man replied, "A man that is called Jesus made clay and anointed mine eyes, and said unto me, Go to the pool of Siloam, and wash; and I went and washed, and I received sight."

We get two excellent Christian lessons from this man: First, he owned that he was the formerly blind man for whom something had been done by the Lord. The goodness of God was too good for him to hide, or, under its smile, try to hide his former condition. Second, he testified that, obeying his Healer, he had received the blessing desired. Let every one whom God blesses tell it, and let him become a constant witness-bearer to the goodness and mercies of God.

The testimonial spirit of this man will be seen throughout the connection. The people asked him where was his healer, but he could not tell. Then they brought the man to the Pharisees, to hear what they had to say; and the Pharisees also asked him to tell how he received his sight; and, as before, the man related the facts, testifying at the same time to the goodness of Jesus for thus helping him. Instead of the Pharisees and all the people rejoicing that the man was brought to see and taken off the streets as a beggar, some began to find fault with Jesus thus, "This



man is not of God, because he keepeth not the Sabbath-day." But others who were more sincere asked, "How can a man who is a sinner do such miracles?" Thus, there was a division. Then the Pharisees felt the man again by asking him, "What sayest thou of him, that he hath opened thine eyes?" The man replied, "He is a prophet." This testimony did not please the Jewish Pharisees. They hardened their hearts against Jesus, and discredited the statement that the man had been born blind. So they called his parents, and asked, with threatening undertone: "Is this your son, who ye say was born blind? How, then, doth he now see?" The parents replied: "We know that this is our son, and that he was born blind. But by what means he now seeth, we know not; or who hath opened his eyes, we know not. He is of age; ask him; he shall speak for himself." One can readily see that this is the language of fear; and John tells us it was caused by the Jewish Pharisees, who had agreed to excommunicate any who spoke favorably of Jesus as being the Christ.

Then the Pharisees again called the man, and said to him, "Give God the praise for your sight if it can not be questioned; we know that this man is a sinner."

How hard it is for envious prejudice to die! The man replied, "Whether he be a sinner or no, I know not; one thing I know, that, whereas I was blind, now I see." They again requested the man to tell what Jesus did to give sight; but the man would not repeat it three times, since they disbelieved his first two statements; and he asked them, "Wherefore would ye hear it again? will ye also be his disciples?" This was going a little too far in faith and boldness of speech in and for Jesus. The Pharisees grew angry at the man, and reviled him and called him a disciple of Jesus; and set themselves up over against him as disciples of Moses. Then they claimed that God spoke to Moses; and to discourage the man's faith they

called Jesus something common, as "scamp" or "fellow," denying to know anything about his origin. But the man proved a match for them. He said: "Herein is a marvelous thing, that ye know not from whence he is; and yet he hath opened mine eyes. Now, we know that God heareth not sinners; but if any man be a worshiper of God, and doeth his will, him he heareth. Since the world began was it not heard that any man opened the eyes of one that was born blind. If this man were not of God, he could do nothing." This is, indeed, a grand defense for a blind man. The Pharisees replied, "Thou wast altogether born in sin, and dost thou teach us?" Then for prejudice only, they excommunicated the man.

Jesus heard this, and when he met the man in the temple he asked him, "Dost thou believe on the Son of God?" The man asked, "Who is he, Lord, that I might believe on him?" This man wanted the Son of God pointed out, so he might be able to use faith in him. He did not know that Jesus, who healed him, was the Son, for he thought Jesus was a prophet. This was the first opportunity to have Jesus revealed unto him as the Son. Jesus then said, "Thou hast both seen him, and it is he that talketh with thee." The man said, "Lord, I believe;" and worshiped Jesus as the Son of God and Giver of his sight to see.

#### JESUS CONTINUES HIS DISCOURSES IN THE TEMPLE.

*John ix, 39-41, and x, 1-21.*

After the blind man was given sight, and Jesus had talked with his enemies and the man concerning the matter, Jesus resumed his discourse to the people. He declared that he came for judgment, that the blind might see, and that they who see might be made blind. The sight and blindness referred to here are to be taken in a spiritual sense. Jesus came to enlighten men's minds with the light

of spiritual knowledge; but the Pharisees claimed to be in possession of the religious knowledge, and rejected Jesus; therefore, they continued in darkness by willfully rejecting the only true light, thus deceiving themselves. They impudently asked Jesus, "Are we blind, also?" Jesus said, "If ye were blind, ye should have no sin; but now ye say, We see; therefore your sin remaineth."

Jesus then left off conversation with the Pharisees, and addressed the whole audience. He pointed out that though the Pharisees rejected him as the world's Teacher and Light, yet God the Father had set him forth as the Door of admission, and all who undertook any other way of salvation are thieves and robbers. They are thieves and robbers because dishonestly claiming what they do not possess of Divine wisdom, and taking that which belonged to Christ only. Jesus shows that he entered and passed through God the Father to reach man with God's provision of salvation; hence, all the mind of God was opened to him for man's complete redemption. The mind of God was revealed to the sheep of the Son by him; and the sheep of his fold know the Shepherd; and the Shepherd knows the sheep, which he calls by name to follow. The sheep know not strangers, neither follow them.

Jesus reaffirmed himself the Door, and declared all predecessors were usurpers of Messianic rights. He showed that they could not save, but if any followed him, the same should be saved. He also showed that they only were to steal, kill, and destroy, and not to save; while he came expressly for salvation. He then pointed out his character above his predecessors, since he would give his life for the sheep. Those before him being only hirelings, would leave the sheep in dangers, because only hired.

Then Jesus mentions other sheep not of the Jewish fold—the Gentiles, whom he will bring to God as well. These will become a part of the fold for one Shepherd.

Many Jews believed the truthfulness of these words, while others did not; and there was a division of them. Some claimed Jesus was possessed of a devil—was mad; but others said: “These are not the words of him that hath a devil. Can a devil open the eyes of the blind?” These last quotations point out the violence of prejudice and the power of reason. Why say Jesus had a devil and was mad, when he proved to be the most holy and perfect man? The only answer to be given is that their hearts were full of envious jealousies and prejudice. Why ask, “Can a devil open the eyes of the blind?” The only answer is, that they saw the truth, and were not willing to close their eyes to it; but allowed it, in coolness, to take possession of their souls. What lessons are here taught! How happy men would be if they would but drive out prejudice and envy, and let calm truth be the arbiter of their lives at all times!

#### SECTION 14.—PETER AND OTHER DISCIPLES CONFESS FAITH IN JESUS.

Matt. xvi, 13-23; Mark viii, 27-33; Luke ix, 18-22.

The Feast of Tabernacles is over, and Jesus takes his departure from Jerusalem, just by what route in this fall season we can not tell. At any rate, this fourteenth move brings Jesus into the coasts, Matthew says, of Cæsarea Philippi. Mark says into the towns; while Luke seems to have Jesus only about Philippi engaged in prayer. Of course, there is no contradiction here. It is just a difference in phraseology, and just as different men speak of the same thing now. Jesus was somewhere near the place, and in meditation; and all at once he raised a question and put it to his disciples. The question was, “Whom do men say I the Son of man am?” This question was not put to his disciples to gain information on this point, but to draw out the faith and confession of the apostles, and to gain an

opportunity to say to them what Jesus had wanted to say long before this time; namely, that he would be put to death by the rulers. However, Jesus did not tell them of this sad occurrence till he had prepared them for such sad news by saying other things. The disciples replied to the question of Jesus thus: "Some say thou art John the Baptist: some, Elias; and others, Jeremias, or one of the prophets." These different opinions of Jesus were heard to be expressed by the different people. But Jesus wished the disciples to tell what they thought, so he might correct any errors, and hand down their faithful confession to the world. So he asked, "But whom say ye that I am?" Peter replied, as usual, for himself and the rest of the disciples: We say, "Thou art the Christ, the Son of the living God." This reply for the twelve was correct and faultless. Jesus made no correction. The teaching of himself had been a success, and correctly imbibed by the disciples. Jesus approved the answer, and said, "Blessed art thou, Simon Barjona: for flesh and blood hath not revealed it unto thee, but my Father which is in heaven." By this language Jesus meant to teach, that such faith as these disciples had and professed was the revelation of God the Father, and not of men. It was, therefore, the true and saving faith for all men.

Then Jesus continued, "Thou art Peter, and upon this rock I will build my Church; and the gates of hell shall not prevail against it." By this language Jesus did not at all mean that Peter was the rock, as the Papists teach, upon which he would build the Church or kingdom; but Jesus meant that the faith which Peter had just professed was the rock. Peter had just said, "I say, Thou art the Christ, the Son of the living God;" so this faith was the rocky foundation upon which he built the Church.

Then Jesus continued, "I will give thee the keys of the kingdom of heaven: and whatsoever thou shalt bind on

earth shall be bound in heaven, and whatsoever thou shalt loose on earth shall be loosed in heaven."

While Jesus spoke to Peter, it must not be forgotten that he spoke to all through Peter. And what he said was not exclusively to him. Jesus did not mean to give Peter any primacy. He did not mean to tell him he had the keys or power alone to bind and loose; and that whoever was bound or loosed by him would be thus dealt with in heaven. Jesus speaks to all the disciples and all true ministers down to the end of time.

Then Jesus charged his disciples that they should not talk of their confession and faith in him. This charge was delivered as much as a discretionary matter as anything else. If those disciples had begun there to talk over this matter to the people, they would have risen up as when he fed the five thousand, and laid hands on Jesus to make him an earthly ruler. But since Jesus was not here for worldly rule, he avoided everything leading thereto. And just here Jesus found an opportunity to break for the first time to his disciples the sad news of his death. He spoke indirectly and prophetically of his death before to others, but never as now to the twelve. He said, however, from that time forth that he must go unto Jerusalem, and suffer many things of the elders and chief priests and scribes, and be killed, and be raised again the third day. But this language was so foreign to the apostolic minds, who expected Christ to abide forever; was so contrary to their tastes and wishes, that Peter, representing the rest, "Took Jesus and began to rebuke him, saying, Be it far from thee, Lord: this shall not be unto thee." Peter, of course, spoke with much confidence in the divine power of Jesus to protect himself. He felt that Jesus would take earthly steps to defend himself, and that he and the disciples, as allies, would prevent any such wrong upon their Master.



But Jesus turned to Peter and said, "Get thee behind me, Satan: thou art an offense unto me: for thou savorest not the things that be of God, but those that be of men." This was one of the instances and times in which Peter went too far. He proceeded far enough to rebuke his Master, and to step in and across the only way of salvation. And it must be remembered that Peter was very contentious with his Lord; hence Jesus called him Satan, meaning adversary; for this is what Peter really was. Peter was an office-seeker in the expected earthly kingdom of his Lord; and he did not want any cowardly and despondent talk of his Master looking any other way than meeting his ambitions. But this kind of talk Jesus declared was man savory, and not godly. Thus we see Peter made to get behind his Lord.

#### JESUS THEN ADDRESSED THE PEOPLE.

When Jesus, in turn for Peter's rebuke, rebuked Peter, he had another opportunity to teach the greatest lesson of the Christian religion; namely, Self-denial. Jesus called the people with his disciples unto him. The things he wished to say were too important to let pass any near enough to hear. When all were near, Jesus began and said, "Whosoever will come after me, let him deny himself, and take up his cross and follow me." This verse, teaching the lesson of self-denial, is the basis of all Christian living. It is the first lesson Jesus had to put into actual practice when he entered upon his life of humiliation for man's redemption. And as Jesus had to learn and teach this lesson by experience in the flesh, he called upon his disciples to enter, first of all, this same school. He said, "Whosoever will come after me, let him deny himself, and take up his cross and follow me." Then Peter was far from observing this lesson when he rebuked his Master, and when he said to him, "This shall not be unto thee." Jesus here teaches that to be a

disciple one must lay himself aside, and in nothing hesitate to go and suffer and labor, if Jesus so require. Peter's course was but to shun the cross and shirk the duties of true discipleship. Hence Jesus said, in further reply, "Whosoever will save his life shall lose it: and whosoever will lose his life for my sake shall find it." Now to lose life is to deny one's self of it; and to gain it, is to avail one's self of it to the exclusion of godliness.

Then Jesus asked a question which appealed to man's reason: "What is a man profited if he shall gain the whole world, and lose his own soul? or what shall a man give in exchange for his soul?" Here Jesus grants the possibility of gaining this world to a man's heart's contentment and bodily needs; but what good does this do in the end, when a man is required to lose for these his soul and eternal interests? There is, then, great wisdom in losing the life that now is for that of eternal bliss, whose merits require the loss of this one.

Then Jesus taught that he would come in the end of time with heaven's rewards, accompanied by the angels, and give every man a reward for the services of this life, good or bad.

Then he spoke by prophecy of the speedy coming of his spiritual kingdom; and this he remarked would so certainly and speedily develop, that some then listening to him would survive to see it. This entire passage might be looked upon as both gloomy and bright. Jesus first gets a clear, concise, and true statement of the apostles' faith. He approved it. It was like putting a wall around one's self and so making it impossible to escape. Then Jesus related the sad, dark story of his end in the flesh, and persisted that it had to be for man's redemption. It was God's plan and way. Then he showed that the Christian life must be one of self-denial, suffering, and gloomy labors; yet the end would be bright, jubilant, and triumphant. And that he will

finally come at the end of time with his angels and rewards for every man, so that both the good and the evil shall be duly rewarded as their works shall be found.

#### SECTION 15.—JESUS TRANSFIGURED.

Matt. xvii, 1-9; Mark ix, 2-10; Luke ix, 28-36.

We last had Jesus in the neighborhood of Cæsarea Philippi; but this fifteenth move of the third year brings him to the Mount of Transfiguration. There has been no little speculation about the place of the Savior's transfiguration, some suggesting, with given reasons, one place, and some another. Since the three synoptists do not say, we are left to guess, and the latest and most reliable guessing has settled upon Mt. Hermon as being the spot where this momentous event transpired. It is said to have taken place six or eight days after the great apostolic confession. If Mt. Hermon is the true site, Jesus did not have far to go during the entire week in which we hear nothing of him after the confession. It usually happened that when any great event was going to happen in the life of Jesus there was a cessation from labor and meditative quietness. Jesus, when mentally and spiritually prepared, went up into this mountain, taking only three of his most matured disciples—Peter, James, and John. Of course, these were taken along as witnesses to the great event of the transfiguration. There was no other need for them; for they added nothing to the occasion, either in word or work. This was the time and occasion when Jesus was to be glorified and most highly acknowledged upon the earth; when the Father was to put the reins of the government in the hands of the Son, and when he should receive the highest acknowledgment of both the law and prophecies in Moses and Elias. There were two distinct acts on the part of the Father: First, the glorification of the Son; and second, the testifying to the sovereignty of Jesus. They were well in the high moun-

tain, far away from all spies and spectators. It was an hour of supreme joy and glory to Jesus, who was about to be once more surrounded by the glory of the Father and to be in his audible presence. An hour doubtless when the legions of the heavenly hosts were about, and when two great worthies would come and talk with him of that death he was to die—brought on by man's disobedience. However, the momentous hour came, and Jesus, who had shown a gloomy, sorrowful face, and one worn and wearied, presented an altogether different face. It shone as the sun; and his raiment, which had been worn and subjected to decay, became as white as light. This was act the first of the Father in visibly honoring his Son. The Son once more gets the visible smile and comfort of the Father; and on the back of this appeared Moses and Elijah, representing the law and the prophets, respectively. These two representatives had a talk with Jesus—subject,

#### THE DEATH OF CRUCIFIXION AT JERUSALEM.

But for Luke we would perhaps not know what was talked of on this occasion; for Matthew and Mark omit this matter, and John and Peter, who were present, do not tell us anything more. Peter, James, and John were present as witnesses, and saw these representatives, and they, doubtless, learned more than they were allowed to tell; but, however it was, they seemed to have been unable to stand such effulgent glory, and they were dazed and so affected that they lost interest and became sleepy. However, Peter ventured one remark before being overcome. When he saw the representatives, and learned, somehow, who they were, he said, "Lord, it is good for us to be here: if thou wilt, let us make here three tabernacles; one for thee, and one for Moses, and one for Elijah." Peter, though impressed by the sunbright face of his Lord and the holy, august presence of Moses and Elijah, was happy and glad.

to be in such a place. There he wanted to stay, and asked that he and his companions be allowed to take steps to that end. Poor Peter doubtless had the vain hopes that this was the beginning of the Messiah's earthly reign, which he had longed and prayed for. But while Peter was talking to his Lord about tabernacles and the benefits to him and his companions from being there, "A bright cloud overshadowed them: and behold a voice out of the cloud, which said, This is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased; hear ye him." This is the second act of the Father to glorify the Son, and this is the second time the Father has audibly testified to the Son in the same words of approval. Nearly three years before this, when Jesus was baptized, the Father's voice said, "This is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased." But now the Father goes one step farther. He says, "Hear ye him;" that is, Jesus is still my pleasure and beloved Son; is still obedient, and has merited my confidence. Therefore, all law and prophecy have their consummation in him; hear him, to do what he says. He is the Word and Counselor for the people. Moses and Elijah both now cease, having their fulfilled teachings in the Son. This language was too much, from the voice from heaven and of God the Father, for the disciples. "They fell on their faces, and were sore afraid." Jesus seeing this, went and touched them, and said, "Arise, and be not afraid." And so the disciples arose, but all by this time was gone, save Jesus, who appeared as before. When they were descending the mountain, Jesus said to his disciples, "Tell the vision to no man, until the Son of man be risen from the dead." Jesus had mentioned his death before this time, but the impression was not made upon their hearts as it was now. So the disciples walked and wondered, What can this language mean—"rising from the dead?" And they asked Jesus, "Well, why then say the scribes that Elias must first come?" That was to ask,

"If thou art the Messiah, how canst thou die? how canst thou, at any rate, die before Elias comes?" Jesus replied: "Elias truly shall first come, and restore all things. But I say unto you, That Elias is come already, and they knew him not, but have done unto him whatsoever they listed. Likewise shall also the Son of man suffer of them." This language was clearly comprehended by the disciples. They understood that Jesus meant John the Baptist, and since he said he would suffer as John, the disciples understood that he meant being put to death as was John.

#### SECTION A.—JESUS HEALS A CHILD.

Matt. xvii, 14-21; Mark ix, 14-29; Luke ix, 37-43.

Let it not be forgotten that we are still in and about the middle of the fall, and the healing of the child of epileptic fits, by casting out the dumb and deaf devil, occurred a day after the transfiguration of Jesus. When this event was over, Jesus returned, with Peter, James, and John, to the place where he left the other disciples. They were somewhere about the foot of Mt. Hermon, and a large crowd of people, doubtless in quest of Jesus, had gathered about them. And when Jesus approached, leading the three, he found the other disciples in a rather unpleasant mood. A man in the crowd had asked them to cast a devil, of great annoyance, out of his son, and they had been trying to do so, but had utterly failed. This was one cause of their unpleasantness. And the scribes were asking a number of perplexing questions, which they could not answer, and this was another source of annoyance.

This son was quite a young man, and was the only child of his anxious parent. He was strangely affected by a spirit which caused him to be both deaf and dumb; also, to commit many unclean deeds. The sickness of the son was a kind of epileptic fits which came on at the instigation



of the spirit, or devil, and wholly unnerved the boy. When Jesus reached the crowd, the father of the boy fell at his feet and besought his help for the boy, stating that he had tried the disciples, who could do him no good. Then the man went on to relate how the spirit affected the child. He said, "Wheresoever he taketh him, he teareth him: and he foameth and gnasheth with his teeth, and pineth." Then Jesus replied to the man, "O faithless generation, how long shall I be with you? how long shall I suffer you? bring him unto me." And, as the man was bringing the boy, the spirit tore him, and he fell, as usual, to the ground, and wallowed, foaming.

Jesus then asked the father, "How long is it ago since this came unto him?" The father replied: "Since a child. And oftentimes it hath cast him into the fire, and into the waters, to destroy him: but if thou canst do anything, have compassion on us, and help us." Jesus then called the father's attention to the fact that the thing needed was faith. That would move all his troubles. "If thou canst believe," said Jesus, "all things are possible." Then the anxious father, seeing what a small thing he had to do to get the troubles of both himself and his son removed, cried out, "Lord, I believe; help my unbelief." Then the people began to congregate, and Jesus, before their eyes, "rebuked the foul spirit, saying, Thou dumb and deaf spirit, I charge thee, come out of him, and enter no more into him." It is to be observed that the spirit is expelled and put under ban and restriction—"Enter no more into him." It is no wonder that the spirit cried when ordered out of his foul throne, where he reigned from the boy's childhood; but, as on all occasions, when the devil can no longer hold the hearts and bodies of men, he makes a great commotion before giving up. He so tore the boy that the people thought he was dead, and so spoke. But Jesus, who was there only to destroy the works of Satan, and not let Satan de-

stroy his works when ordered out, took the boy by the hand and lifted him up. Then Jesus gave the child to his father, and entered a house for a little quiet. And while seated among his disciples, they asked him, "Why could not we cast him out?" Jesus replied, "This kind can come forth by nothing but by prayer and fasting." By this language Jesus meant to urge the practicability of prayer and fasting, to say that they are necessary means of grace for strength.

SECTION 16.—JESUS PREDICTS HIS DEATH AND RESURRECTION, AND PROVIDES TRIBUTE.

Matt. xvii, 23-27; Mark ix, 30-32; Luke ix, 43-45.

While Jesus still lingered in Galilee, after the transfiguration and healing of the epileptic child, he further talked and more plainly spoke with his disciples regarding his approaching end. But Peter voiced the sentiment of them all when he rebuked Jesus about talking of such a thing; but since Jesus gave Peter such a good sitting down about his forwardness and attempts to frustrate the Divine plans, the other disciples were really afraid to say anything about the matter one way or another. Yet the language was hidden and unintelligible to them. The language was not only unmeaning to them, but kept them apprehensive; and it was anything but desirable; for all the disciples believed Christ was to abide forever in the flesh, and, of course, in a visible kingdom. The sadness of his cruel end always had its bright side. Jesus always gave, as its bright side, his resurrection. He never spoke of his betrayal and death as his end; for the resurrection was always present in his mouth to counteract them. However much Jesus spoke of his resurrection and triumph over death, and whatever he said to show his disciples that his death was essential and to comfort their dejected hearts,

they were exceedingly sorry to hear Jesus repeatedly stating his betrayal and sad death. They were altogether unprepared for it in body and mind.

#### JESUS REACHES CAPERNAUM AGAIN.

As well as this sixteenth move brings Jesus from Mt. Hermon and into the rural parts of Galilee, it also brings him back to Capernaum.

And when it was known that Jesus had returned to Capernaum, those who received tribute money came to the Apostle Peter, for the reason that Jesus was stopping at his house, and asked Peter, "Doth not your Master pay tribute?" This was not a tax levied by the Romans, who at this time held the Jews as tributaries, but was a sum required by Moses to support the Jerusalem temple (Ex. xxx, 13), and paid by every legalized male. This tribute was kept up among the Jews, even in all their dispersions, till after the time of Vespasian, who ordered it to be paid into the Roman treasury. However, Peter replied, "Yes, my Master pays tribute." And Jesus did, and always had kept up his Church dues. However, Peter did not pay for his Lord, nor for himself; nor did he have any more talk about the matter, nor give any promises when he would pay, or tell Jesus, as far as we know. The reason for this, we infer, is that Peter had no money, and knew that his Lord had none. But when Peter reached his house, where Jesus was, Jesus began to talk of the matter even before Peter did. Jesus knew Peter had been called on for tax, and approached about his also. He could read Peter's heart and what he wanted to say and how he felt over the matter. So Jesus asked Peter as soon as he entered the house, "What thinkest thou, Simon? of whom do the kings of the earth take custom or tribute? of their own children, or of strangers?" Peter replied, "Of strangers." Jesus

said, "The children then are free." By this language Jesus doubtless meant to say, Since this money is levied for the support of the temple, of which I am Lord, that exempts me from paying this tax; and my disciples, acting as priests, should go free. Even to the present, those who give all their labor and time for the temple service are rightfully exempt from contributing to the Church revenues. This, however, does not free the ministers from giving benevolently every time they have an opportunity. But Jesus wished to set a valuable example; namely, to not offend; to give no lawful grounds for moral complaint. Jesus said, "Lest we should offend them [that minister the affairs of the temple], go thou to the sea, and cast a hook, and take up the fish that first cometh up; and when thou hast opened his mouth, thou shalt find a piece of money: that take, and give unto them for me and thee." The "piece of money" mentioned was the stater, equal to sixty-four cents of our United States money. The amount levied on each male was about thirty-one and a half or thirty-two cents of our money, so that the amount found in the fish covered the taxes of both Jesus and Peter. Now as to the miraculous element in this transaction. If Jesus did not create the money in the fish's mouth, and I do n't believe he did, yet it was miraculous knowledge to determine that a certain fish, among millions, possessed the stater, and that that fish would be the first caught. If the stater was lost, it took miraculous knowledge to determine that fact and what special fish found it to swallow. If it were created in the fish, it took miraculous power to do so. And it had a great lesson to Peter: it pointed out that, in fishing for men with his gospel hook, God would stand by in some way to supply his bodily needs. Peter obeyed his Lord, went to the sea, cast into the water his hook, and the first fish that he caught had the stater in its mouth, which Peter took and paid the tributes.

## SECTION A.—THE DISCIPLES DISPUTE—JESUS'S DISCOURSE.

Matt. xviii, 1-35; Mark ix, 33-50; Luke ix, 46-50.

Our last move brought Jesus unto Capernaum, where he is still abiding through this section.

After Jesus had quietly reached the city, and was passing off the time with his disciples, he asked them, "What was it that ye disputed among yourselves by the way?" The disciples held their peace; for they looked for a timely correction or rebuke, for by the way they had been disputing among themselves who should be the greatest. This greatness had reference to who should fill the highest office in the Messiah's earthly kingdom. It is well known that the disciples never understood the nature of Christ's kingdom till he was put to death and raised. And, as his friends and principal followers, the disciples believed the official staff or cabinet of Jesus, as Messiah, would be composed of themselves. But who should enjoy the right to sit nearest to Jesus was the bone of contention. Some said Peter is the man; others, John is the man; while still others said James is the proper man. But since their hopes were vain, their ideas wrong, and their whole talk tended to gender strife, Jesus took this occasion to correct them. Among the first things he said were these, "If any man desire to be first, the same shall be last of all, and servant of all." This was on the line of the Christian doctrine, but very strange indeed to the worldly-minded disciples, who were expecting great earthly pomposity. To illustrate what he taught and said, Jesus called a little child and set him in the midst of the disciples, with proud hopes, and said, "Except ye be converted, and become as little children, ye shall not enter into the kingdom of heaven." Therefore Jesus knocked all the life out of the ideas held by the disciples. He declared that they had to be converted and become as little children even to get into the kingdom he authorized. Then he continued, "Whosoever,



therefore, shall humble himself as this little child, the same is greatest in the kingdom of heaven." This was an unmistakable illustration to teach by; for there was a little child, pointing out the necessity of being born again. It was helpless even to provide for its needs; hence, dependent, pointing out the dependence of man upon God. It was simple and ignorant, whose judgment was worth nothing. Pointing out man's inability even to judge what is best or most wise for him to do at all times. Jesus further said, "Whoso shall receive one such little child in my name, receiveth me." He certainly added this thought to encourage the spirit of humility; for Christ himself is thus received by dwelling in the humble. Then he continues the idea on the other hand, "Whoso shall offend one of these little ones which believe in me, it were better for him that a millstone were hanged about his neck, and that he were drowned in the depth of the sea." This places quite a strong assurance down for the believer in the Lord Jesus, and quite a judgment upon the offender who offends one of the Christian believers. Then Jesus leaves the individual, and speaks of the offending world as certainly coming under woes for offenses. Thus Jesus shows that he takes the part of his little ones, and that as much against the many as the few. Jesus also urges that the dearest member or members should be destroyed rather than allow them to cause one to offend, since it is better to enter heaven with some offending members gone than into hell with them all. Nay, Christ does not even allow one to despise any of his little ones, much less than to offend them in word or act; for hatred of these will be hatred of Christ, who has guarding angels always to watch the oppositions to his saints. Jesus teaches that God's eye is always over the righteous to hear and see their distresses; and the angels are ever beholding the face of God, who is always ready to point out any tribulations to his children.



Then Jesus pointed out himself as the Son of man having come to save the lost, and that he would go out of the way in effort to save even one sheep gone astray. And the salvation and restoration of one sheep will cause greater joy than ninety-nine which never were lost.

Then Jesus called attention to the great law of forgiveness, and first laid down directions regarding transgressors. He said, "If thy brother trespass against thee, go and tell him his fault between thee and him alone: if he shall hear thee, thou hast gained thy brother. But if he will not hear thee, then take with thee one or two more, that in the mouth of two or three witnesses every word may be established. And if he shall neglect to hear them, tell it unto the Church: but if he neglect to hear the Church, let him be unto thee as a heathen man and a publican." We have here the only true mode of dealing with those who wrong us, and any other way is unchristian and outside the doctrines of the Christian community. Any man or woman who resorts to these measures will always be successful in dealing with offenders and will reflect honor upon the Christian cause; for any man who will not be thus won will lose his hold and claims of heaven. Jesus proceeded to teach the value of soul agreement in Church discipline and brotherly transaction; that if two shall agree touching anything they shall ask, it shall be done for them by the Heavenly Father. Just then Peter asked, "Lord, how oft shall my brother sin against me and I forgive him? till seven times?" This was a very natural question for Peter to ask the new Teacher; for the Jews had a maxim to forgive an injury only three times. But Peter knew his Lord would not stop there, so he was generous enough to go twice as far, supposing his Lord would be well pleased. But Jesus was not willing for Peter to stop at seven pardons, but called upon him to forgive seventy times seven. However, we must not restrict our-

selves to so many units, here, as the only meaning of Jesus or Peter. The sevens and seventies of the Jews always are figuratives meaning indefinite numbers. They may do so here. At any rate, Jesus certainly means an indefinite number of times to forgive the repenting brother. He means as often as he repents.

Jesus then spoke a parable—that the kingdom of heaven was like a king taking account of his servants. The first owed ten thousand talents; but since he had nothing to pay, his lord, according to the law and custom of the ancients, commanded him to be sold, his wife, children, and all he possessed, to settle the debt. This servant, realizing his utter helplessness, fell down at the feet of his lord and besought his patience, promising to pay later. Accordingly, the lord forgave him and loosed him. It is well to notice this man's account. It was quite large. It was about \$9,436 of our money, allowing the talent to be worth \$943.66. It is almost no wonder that the king decided to sell out a man owing this much and having nothing to pay when called to account. "But this same forgiven servant went out and found one of his creditors who owed him only one hundred pence: and he also laid hands on him, and took him by the throat, saying, Pay me that thou owest. And his fellow-servant fell down at his feet, and besought him, saying, Have patience with me, and I will pay thee all. And he would not: but went and cast him into prison, till he should pay the debt." It is to be noticed how differently these two creditors acted. The first was moved with pity, and forbore with a man who owed \$9,436; while the second would not forbear with his debtor who owed only one hundred pence, or sixteen dollars of our money, and he being the man just forgiven so much. But the case resulted thus: When the fellow-servants of the unforgiving creditor saw how he treated his debtor, they were very sorry, and came and told unto their lord all that

was done. Then his lord said unto him, "O thou wicked servant, I forgave thee all that debt, because thou desiredst me: Shouldst not thou also have had compassion on thy fellow-servant, even as I had pity on thee? And his lord was wroth, and delivered him to the tormentors, till he should pay all that was due unto him." Then Jesus brought in forcibly his application. He said, "So likewise shall my Heavenly Father do also unto you, if ye from your hearts forgive not every one his brother their trespasses." Jesus says, "So will my Heavenly Father do," meaning that he will not forgive us if we do not forgive our debtors. When Jesus says "from the heart," he means true, clean-hearted forgiveness, that will not react, nor retain even the memory of a wrong deed.

#### SECTION 17.—JESUS TAKING HIS FINAL LEAVE OF GALILEE.

Matthew xix, 1; Mark x, 1; and Luke all agree that Jesus about this time (December) left the parts of Galilee, and crossed the Jordan into Perea, where he spent some time prior to going into Judea to the last passover of his lifetime. Jesus began his public works and doctrines in Judea, and spent in its northeastern parts about eight months, and only left as a matter of discretion and better judgment when persecuted by his enemies. He then went into Galilee, where he spent a year and six months. Now we reach the time when he leaves the second grand division of the Holy Land and crosses over into Perea, where he carries on his public works as usual during the next twenty or thirty days of his life; then goes over to Bethany and Jerusalem. When Jesus went through parts of Perea, teaching and working miracles, as he did, it might have been said he had touched all the parts and principal sections of the Holy Land and its borders.

On his way beyond the Jordan his trip was apparently

through Samaria. Luke tells us that Jesus sent messengers ahead to a village of Samaria to provide lodging and other necessities for a specified time; but because the Samaritans thought Jesus was going to Jerusalem, they refused to entertain him and his disciples. When the disciples knew of this inhospitality to them and their Master, James and John approached Jesus, and asked, "Lord, wilt thou that we command fire to come down from heaven and consume them, as Elias did?" But Jesus, who is always a loving and merciful being, rebuked those men when he turned to them and said, "Ye know not what manner of spirit ye are of; for the Son of man is not come to destroy men's lives, but to save them." The teaching of Jesus, and also his example in this particular instance, is so divine and humane! Although Jesus was the Father's Son and Creator of all things, and had the power to save or destroy, yet in the face of all such consideration he did nothing to that mongrel race who hated him and refused to entertain him because he was a Jew. He only submitted to their indignities, and passed on to another village to spend the night.

#### SECTION A.—JESUS REACHES PEREA AND SENDS OUT THE SEVENTY.

Matt. xi, 20-24; Luke x, 1-16.

Jesus finally crossed the Jordan, and began his work in Perea; but, as his time for labor in that section was short and work urgent, he organized, in addition to his regular force, thirty-five companies to go out and teach and evangelize in the towns and cities whither he himself would come. The act of sending out these Seventy by twos was similar to sending out the Twelve. It was an act of emergency, to meet the demands of a labor which would have called for more time than Jesus and his dis-

ciples could give. Jesus was rushing upon his end, with only about four more months to live; and every moment, with him, had to count in consummating the work of redemption. So Jesus said to the Seventy, "As ye go, pray to the Father for recruits; for the harvest truly is great, and the laborers are few." Jesus would send them in the name of the Father, and depending upon him, and not themselves. He knew if they went forth with the least part of themselves, they would accomplish no good. They could do no missionary evangelizing, and could not withstand their enemies, who would surround them as wolves do the lambs. He sent them wholly depending upon the Father, so that they were instructed to leave purse, scrip, and shoes; and so important was their message that they were not even to salute men by the wayside. They, first of all duties, were to pronounce peace upon every house, and, if the inmates were peaceable, there they were, for the time, to abide. If not, their peace was to return to them. They were to eat such things as were given them in the cities, since taking offense in this wise would largely hinder the success of their labors. They were to act as physicians toward the sick, and preach that the kingdom of heaven was at hand. And the cities which should not receive them they were instructed to leave, shaking off their very street dust. Concerning such cities, Jesus said, "It will be more tolerable for Sodom in the day of reckoning accounts."

Then Jesus pronounced woes upon Chorazin and Bethsaida, because they failed to repent and believe for the sake of his mighty works. He said it will be better for Tyre and Sidon in judgment than for them; for if those cities had had such light, they would have repented in sackcloth and ashes. Jesus spoke against the pride of wicked Capernaum, and pronounced a prophecy which has been and is being fulfilled, even upon the materiality and

identity of that place. No one certainly knows where it stood.

Then Jesus said, for their encouragement: "Your words are mine. If they reject them, they reject me. If they hear them, they then shall hear me. If your hearers despise you, they will despise me; and he that despiseth me despiseth Him that sent me."

#### THE RETURN OF THE SEVENTY.

After the Seventy had been gone some twenty-five or more days, they returned to Jesus, full of joy at their success. They said, "Lord, even the devils are subject unto us through thy name." Jesus said, as an expression of joy in their joy, "I beheld Satan as lightning fall from heaven." Then he rearmed and reconsecrated them by throwing around them miraculous protection. He said: "I give unto you power to tread on serpents and scorpions, and over all the power of the enemy; and nothing shall by any means hurt you. Notwithstanding, in this rejoice not that the spirits are subject unto you; but rather rejoice because your names are written in heaven." Jesus wished the Seventy to know that there was greater joy than they had in conquering oppositions. It was that which arose from the fact that their names were on God's Book of Life. And in this gladsome report Jesus did not only rejoice with his disciples, but went unto the Father with thanksgiving. He said, "I thank thee, O Father, Lord of heaven and earth, because thou hast hid these things from the wise and prudent, and hast revealed them unto babes. Even so, Father; for so it seemed good in thy sight." Then Jesus returned, in speech, to the Seventy, and said: "All things are delivered unto me of my Father; and no man knoweth the Son, but the Father; neither knoweth any man the Father, save the Son, and he to whomsoever the Son will reveal him." Then Jesus makes a worldly ap-



peal, saying: "Come unto me, all ye that labor and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest. Take my yoke upon you, and learn of me; for I am meek and lowly in heart, and ye shall find rest unto your souls; for my yoke is easy, and my burden is light." This beautiful thanksgiving service to the Father and this universal call, with promises of Divine grace, are said to be the most sublime utterances of the entire sayings of Jesus. From them sparkles only Divinity—there is here found no humanity.

Luke says Jesus turned and said to his disciples alone: "Blessed are the eyes which see the things that ye see; for I tell you that many prophets and kings have desired to see those things which ye see, and have not seen them, and to hear those things which ye hear, and have not heard them."

#### SECTION B.—PARABLE OF THE GOOD SAMARITAN.

Luke x, 25-37.

One thing peculiar about the Perean ministry of Jesus, and rather annoying, is that we can not, for want of data, locate him. All that is said is that he sent the Seventy to the towns whither he himself would come. The probable reasons why the writers do not locate Jesus are: First, his stay in this section was very brief; second, he was evidently always on the go, and halted not long enough for the writers to get sufficient topical information; third, the writers seek to give the principal statements and facts; fourth, there are many things Jesus spoke of, and did, which the writers did not get, as they were not all with Jesus at all times.

Jesus was somewhere in these parts when a certain lawyer, by way of temptation, asked, "Master, what shall I do to inherit eternal life." This man was, of course, a Jew, and versed in the religious law. He knew what the law required to gain eternal life, but, being of the Phari-

saic class, he wanted to test the ability of Jesus to answer, or wished to get an answer such as he could use against him. But Jesus was always ready for his enemies, it mattered not under what colors they came to him. He knew man, and could read his very thoughts and intentions below his words.

Jesus asked this lawyer: "What is written in the law? How readest thou?" This man, being informed, answered correctly. He said, "Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy strength, and with all thy mind, and thy neighbor as thyself." Jesus, who came, not to destroy, but to fulfill the law, said: "Thou hast answered right. This do, and thou shalt live."

But since the lawyer was not a sincere seeker after truth, he proposed some further questions to reach a desired end. He asked Jesus regarding the word "neighbor," "And who is my neighbor?" This was a very natural question for a Jew to ask; for they taught that Jews were neighbors to Jews living near, and to no others. But Jesus was no such Jew in heart or in doctrine. So, to draw out this Jew, and teach the ages and generations the true neighborly lesson, Jesus utters a parable. He said: "A certain man went down from Jerusalem to Jericho, and fell among thieves, which stripped him of his raiment, and wounded him, and departed, leaving him half dead. And by chance there came down a certain priest that way; and when he saw him, passed by on the other side. And likewise a Levite, when he was at the place, came and looked on him, and passed by on the other side. But a certain Samaritan, as he journeyed, came where he was, and, when he saw him, had compassion on him, and went to him, and bound up his wounds, pouring in oil and wine, and set him on his own beast, and brought him to an inn, and took care of him. And on the morrow, when he de-

parted, he took out two pence, and gave them to the host, and said unto him, Take care of him; and whatsoever thou spendest more, when I come again, I will repay thee." We have now the parable, and we have the three characters to look at, considering the man wounded was a Jew, the priest was a Jew, and the Levite was a Jew. We see how these religious teachers and officials did by a mobbed man of their own race. And we see how the Samaritan, whom the Jews hated and dissociated, did. The parable being laid open, so that the lawyer could see it from every point of view, Jesus asked him, "Which, now, of these three, thinkest thou, was neighbor unto him that fell among the thieves?" There really was but one possible, true answer, and the man gave it. He said, "He that showed mercy on him." This was just what Jesus wanted to hear; and right out of this answer he draws the great lesson of neighborly kindness. He said to the lawyer, "Go, and do thou likewise." Hence we see Jesus's approval of the law and what he requires to inherit eternal life. It is summed up in loving the Lord with all our hearts, and treating our neighbors as we would have them treat us, and this regardless of race, color, or previous conditions.

#### SECTION C.—JESUS TEACHES HOW TO PRAY.

Luke xi, 1-13.

While Jesus was praying in some unknown place in Perea, a disciple—not one of the apostles, perhaps one of the Seventy—came unto him, and said, "Lord, teach us to pray, as John also taught his disciples." Most teachers of religion anciently taught their disciples some form of prayer; hence this man asked as much of Jesus. This prayer, however, is not to be confounded with that in the Sermon on the Mount. The prayer in Matthew was general; this is particular. It was given rather as a model by way of contrast with those of the heathen and Pharisees.

This prayer is for guidance and comprehensive requests. Jesus, however, had given a perfect model of prayer, and therefore he did not need to change it; so he gives the same here, in substance, if not in words. The slight variations come more out of translations and revisions than anything else. I think, however, that this form of Luke is more excellent than that of Matthew; but as we have noticed the one by Matthew, we shall only refer to that for consideration.

Jesus, to encourage the use and practice of prayer, speaks a parable by which he enforces it. He said: "Which of you shall have a friend, and shall go unto him at midnight, and say unto him, Friend, lend me three loaves; for a friend of mine in his journey is come to me, and I have nothing to set before him; and he from within shall answer and say, Trouble me not; the door is now shut, and my children are with me in bed; I can not rise and give thee. I say unto you, Though he will not rise and give him, because he is his friend, yet because of his importunity he will rise and give him as many as he needeth." Thus Jesus reaches the point where he can urge prayer through importunity. The case refers to cold humanity; yet because the one outside is very urgent, the one inside rises and grants his request. Jesus would again here ask, "If ye be evil, and sinful humanity can do thus well, what may you expect from the rich and bountiful hand of a Heavenly Father who is all love and benevolence?" Therefore he adds, "Ask, and it shall be given you; seek, and ye shall find; knock, and it shall be opened unto you." The thought is reassuring and comforting that our Heavenly Father, who is in possession of all things present and to come, is willing to bestow them upon us, his children, for the lone sake of humbly asking him for what we need. And the proof of this is that "every one that asketh receiveth; and he that seeketh findeth; and to him that

knocketh it shall be opened." Then, with Paul, we may join: "Let us come boldly to a throne of grace, that we may obtain mercy and find grace to help in time of need; for we have not a high priest which can not be touched with the feeling of our infirmities; but was in all points tempted like as we are, yet without sin." How willing God is to supply all our needs can only be found out by actual experience. Go to him, and see for thyself.

#### SECTION D.—JESUS FEASTS AT A PHARISEE'S HOUSE.

Luke x1, 37-54.

Jesus is still in Perea, in December; and, while speaking on one occasion—perhaps in the street or outdoor place—a certain Pharisee besought him to dine with him. We note that Jesus was always ready to accept the hospitalities of his friends or foes. He knew well the object of this Pharisee in offering this hypocritical invitation. Notwithstanding, he went in and sat down to dine with him without washing his hands. This fact caused the Pharisee to marvel. But to his words about washing, Jesus replied: "Now do ye Pharisees make clean the outside of the cup and platter; but your inward part is full of ravening and wickedness. Ye fools, did not he that made that which is without make that which is within also?" Jesus by these words reproves the Pharisee, and shows him how inconsistent it was to claim outward cleanliness when there was inward impurity, or, as Jesus called it, inward, ravening wickedness. The lesson that Jesus teaches here is that the heart's motives and intentions are the things to be pure, and not only outward appearances and words. Then Jesus continued to teach this Pharisee a more important lesson than words or only outward cleanliness. Jesus said, "Give alms of such things as ye have, and behold, all things are clean unto you." By these words Jesus would say the duty of giving out of a pure heart for mercy's sake is one

of the means of religious cleansing of sin; and if the sins of the body be washed clean, there will be no moral pollution that needs to concern one. Then Jesus pronounced woes upon the treacherous Pharisees as follows: "Woe unto you, Pharisees; for ye tithe mint and rue and all manner of herbs, and pass over judgment and the love of God! These ought ye to have done, and not to leave the other undone. Woe unto you Pharisees; for ye love the uppermost seats in the synagogue and greetings in the markets. Woe unto you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites; for ye are as graves which appear not, and the men that walk over them are not aware of them." It is to be observed that Jesus pronounces three woes against this Pharisaic class because of their hypocritical characters, notwithstanding they claimed to be religious teachers and rulers. Real character and its quality are what Jesus is aiming at in all he here says. At this juncture a lawyer interrupted Jesus, because in the utterance of the third woe he mentioned, as not before, the scribes. He said to Jesus, "Master, thus saying, thou reproachest us also." But Jesus makes no pause in hurling the thunderbolts of his woes because this man's class were lawyers. He adds: "Woe unto you also, ye lawyers; for ye lade men with burdens grievous to be borne; and ye yourselves touch not the burden with one of your fingers. Woe unto you; for ye build the sepulchers of the prophets, and your fathers killed them. Truly, ye bear witness that ye allow the deeds of your fathers; for they indeed killed them, and ye build their sepulchers. Therefore also said the wisdom of God; I will send them prophets and apostles, and some of them they shall slay and persecute; that the blood of all the prophets, which was shed from the foundation of the world, may be required of this generation, from the blood of Abel unto the blood of Zacharias, which perished between the altar and the temple. Verily, I say unto you, It shall



be required of this generation. Woe unto you, lawyers! for ye have taken away the key of knowledge. Ye entered not in yourselves, and them that were entering in ye hindered." When Jesus ceased to speak reproachfully of the lawyers, they attempted to provoke some irascible word by getting him to talk much; for they were laying in wait to get some words by which they might accuse him.

SECTION E.—JESUS DISCOURSES WITH A GREAT MULTITUDE.

Luke xii, 1-59.

Jesus was at some unknown spot in Perea, and, as usual, a vast multitude surrounded him. And he began to discourse with them by way of doctrine and warnings. He again warned his disciples of the false doctrines of the Pharisees, since it was capable of doing much harm to the true doctrines which he set forth. And Jesus well warned his apostles against the Pharisaic leaven; for it did nothing but disseminate doctrines against them and the person of Christ, to destroy or make both void. However, Jesus makes the point that the day will come when every man's doctrines and doings shall be laid open and be proven whether they are good or bad. He therefore encouraged his disciples to go on in the fearless discharge of all duties since their opposers could go no farther than injure the body. God was their Guide; and since he held the destinies of both worlds in his hands, he alone is to be feared. Then again Jesus points out the loving care of the Father, who carefully looks after the welfare of the most insignificant creatures, then much more those of his own imae and likeness. Jesus encourages faith in himself by saying he will confess his believers before the Father and the angels, and that he will deny before them all who deny him. He continued this encouragement by saying sins against him, but repented of, have forgiveness; but

not so regarding the sins against the Holy Ghost. Then he added, for their still further encouragement under trials, that the Holy Ghost would take their part in words, to rescue them from the hands of their assailants before the courts.

Just at this juncture in the discourse a young man stepped up and requested Jesus to have his brother to divide the inheritance with him. We do not know the exact character of this patrimony, though it was doubtless the estate of deceased parents. And it does not seem, from the way the young man came, and from what Jesus said, that he was very sincere in his request. If he were not sincere, it was a snare to entrap Jesus; for if he had given any countenance to the request, it would have been alleged that Jesus was interfering with civil affairs. But Jesus was never entrapped by designers; for he always exposed even their motives and intentions before they began to speak. Here Jesus replied, "Man, who made me a judge or a divider over you?" This language clearly points out the fact that Jesus was not the man to entertain questions of human law and order. His work was religious and for the souls of men. But while Jesus declined any part in adjusting the estate, he saw a good chance to teach, parabolically, a great lesson of religious truth; and he did it. He lifted up his voice then to all near, and said: "Take heed, and beware of covetousness; for a man's life consisteth not in the abundance of the things which he possesseth." Then comes the parable and its religious lesson. Jesus said: "The ground of a certain rich man brought forth plentifully, and he thought within himself, saying, What shall I do, because I have no room where to bestow my fruits? And he said, This will I do: I will pull down my barns, and build greater; and there will I bestow all my fruits and my goods. And I will say unto my soul, Soul, thou hast much goods laid up for many years. Take thine

ease, eat, drink, and be merry. But God said unto him, Thou fool, this night thy soul shall be required of thee; then whose shall those things be which thou hast provided? So is he that layeth up treasure for himself and is not rich toward God."

This parable is self-explanative, and its lessons can be easily discovered. The Savior wished to emphasize concern for the soul-life, as well as for that of the body. Jesus then turned to his disciples, and continued, "Therefore I say unto you, Take no thought for your life, what ye shall eat, neither for the body, what ye shall put on." Then Jesus points out life as that which is uppermost. He called it "the life," showing that he had reference to that above the physical. The life, he says, should be considered before all earthly objects, since its right concern brings all bodily needs. Jesus again referred to other inferior creatures which were cared for by the Father as evidence that he would keep those who were followers of the Son. Jesus would further take the minds of his disciples off of the objects of this life, chiefly because this life was not at all in their control, not even to add one cubit to their stature.

Here Jesus addressed them by way of encouraging their ministerial labors of the kingdom. He gave them to know that it was the Father's good pleasure to give them the kingdom in spite of all their oppositions. Jesus further urged a righteous disposition of any and all earthly possessions that might in any way hinder their religious lives, and make investments above with God and away from corrosion or plundering. And this course would be wise, since a man's treasures control his heart. If their treasures were with God, there would be their heart's crave to get also. To this end then Jesus urged: "Let your loins be girded about, and your lights burning, and ye yourselves like unto men that wait for their lord when he return from the wedding; that, when he cometh and knocketh, they may open

unto him immediately. Blessed are those servants whom the lord, when he cometh, shall find watching. Verily, I say unto you that he shall gird himself and make them to sit down to meat, and will come forth and serve them. And if he shall come in the second watch, or come in the third watch, and find them so, blessed are those servants. And this know, that if the good man of the house had known what hour the thief would come, he would have watched, and not have suffered his house to be broken through. Be ye therefore ready also; for the Son of man cometh at an hour when ye think not."

Peter interrupted the Master by asking, "Was the parable unto the disciples only, or general?" Jesus continued: "Who is that faithful and wise steward whom his lord shall make ruler over his household, to give them their portion of meat in due season? Blessed is that servant whom his lord, when he cometh, shall find so doing. Of a truth I say unto you that he will make him ruler over all that he hath. But and if that servant say in his heart, My lord delayeth his coming; and shall begin to beat the men-servants and maidens, and to eat and drink and to be drunken; the lord of that servant will come in a day when he looketh not for him, and at an hour when he is not aware, and will cut him in sunder, and will appoint him his portion with the unbelievers. And that servant which knew his lord's will, and prepared not himself, neither did according to his will, shall be beaten with many stripes. But he that knew not and did commit things worthy of stripes, shall be beaten with few stripes; for unto whomsoever much is given, of him shall be much required; and to whom men have committed much, of him they will ask the more." Jesus then spoke subjectively. He said that he was come to send fire on the earth, by which he meant some form of judgment for sin—perhaps the Roman depredations of the Jews. It may also have reference to spiritual fire, to be

used for the consumption of sin in the world. However, he points out his passion and coming death as a precursor of this fire. He calls his sufferings a "baptism"—and truly they were; for Jesus was truly a victim of five bloody wounds, besides the blood of his brow.

Jesus then pointed out the fact that his mission and course in the world in dealing with sin would not give, as was supposed, peace upon earth, but rather division of the nearest relatives; for all who believed on him and loved righteousness would be called on to oppose evil in the closest earthly friends. Then Jesus spoke of the heavenly signs that were generally understood, and asked, "Why did they not understand the spiritual signs each day before their eyes?" It was the spiritual signs of religious doctrine set forth by himself that Jesus referred to. Finally he gave directions how to deal with their adversaries who would annoy them for his sake.

#### SECTION F.—JESUS CONTINUES HIS DISCOURSE TO THE GREAT MULTITUDE.

Luke xiii, 1-9.

Jesus continues his Perean discourse begun in the previous chapter. And while discoursing, some one who misunderstood the character and doctrine of Jesus began to tell of the tragedy of Pilate, who, being an enemy to Herod, had slain many of Herod's subjects. This was perhaps the first time Jesus ever heard of this, and it was told either to ensnare him by getting him to meddle with civil affairs, or to have him give his judgment regarding such matters for their adjustment; but Jesus is not carried off either way, yet teaches a spiritual lesson. And his lesson was that it is not the magnitude of crime alone that condemns or alleviates, but that all sin is to be repented of, or it, small or great, will bring ruin to the soul. He taught that mere

accidents, such as the fall of the Siloam tower, is not to be pointed out as a judgment of God for men's great crimes only, since Divine judgments are meted out with no allowances for sin. Jesus then resumed his discourse, and began the parable of the fig-tree.

#### SECTION G.—BARREN FIG-TREE.

The parable: "A certain man had a fig-tree planted in his vineyard, and he came and sought fruit thereon, and found none. Then said he unto the dresser of his vineyard, Behold, these three years I come seeking fruit on this fig-tree, and find none. Cut it down. Why cumbereth it the ground? And he, answering, said unto him, Lord, let it alone this year also, till I shall dig about it and dung it. And if it bear fruit, well; and if not, then after that thou shalt cut it down." Among the crowds who always followed Jesus for light and benefit could always be found the enemy—mostly the Pharisees. For this reason Jesus spoke more frequently in parables. These parables were not always understood by the enemy nor the friend; but to the latter Jesus always, in private, explained his parables. What did he wish to teach the Pharisaic mind here but that they, the leaders of the Jews, were the barren fig-tree, around whose hearts he had dug and dunged with his Word and rich, gracious mercies for nearly three years; yet they were fruitless and sinful as a race? But he was willing to bear with them another year, and try means untried, and if they would open their stony hearts and let him in, well; if not, they should be cut down. How plain was this language, and yet how dark to a mind of sinful prejudice! Sin and prejudice always becloud man's best intellect, and rush him on to his hasty doom. Jesus had pleaded with his own race, represented by the Pharisees, in so many ways and by so many references to Holy Writ;



yet no word nor work could cause their minds to fly open to eternal truth; hence they rushed on to their own doom, and perished under the Roman ax.

SECTION H.—JESUS ENTERS A SYNAGOGUE AND HEALS AN INFIRM WOMAN ON THE SABBATH.

Luke xiii, 10-17.

There is no wonder that Jesus was in the synagogue on the Sabbath; and when he saw there this poor, invalid woman, it is not strange that he at once pitied her and began to help her. We know not her disease. It was, perhaps, chronic rheumatism. It had gone on eighteen years, and she was bowed together. Her suffering must have been great, since her attitude was miserable. She could in no wise straighten herself. We can not tell why she was at the synagogue. There are many suppositions: First, it may have been her custom to attend; second, it may be she was there to ask alms; third, she may have been there, having heard that Jesus would be there, whom she hoped to see in behalf of her infirmities. At any rate, whether one or all these causes brought her, she was there; and while we have no prayer of hers, Jesus does speak, and relief comes to her. He said, "Woman, thou art loosed from thine infirmity;" then laid his hands on her, and immediately she was made straight, and glorified God.

Yet it is strange that, in the face of the greatest sufferings, here is some one to oppose the Healer and remedies. After this poor woman was released, the ruler of the synagogue spoke with anger, because, as he Pharisaically claimed, it had been done on the Sabbath-day. But Jesus pointed out at once his inconsistent hypocrisy in that he showed that they were not Sabbath-keepers; for they will loose their ox or ass, and lead him to drink on the Sabbath; hence, if they pitied a mere beast, and thus cared for it, should he not care for a daughter of Abraham?

When Jesus had finished this exposure, the accusing enemy was ashamed, and the people rejoiced for what had been done. Jesus always showed himself a faithful friend to humanity, regardless of men's prayers or praise. He always went about doing good for the sake of righteousness.

SECTION I.—JESUS RESUMES HIS DISCOURSE AND SPEAKS  
PARABLES.

Luke xiii, 18-35.

The first parable: "Jesus said, Unto what is the kingdom of God like? And whereunto shall I resemble it? It is like a grain of mustard-seed which a man took and cast into his garden, and it grew and waxed a great tree; and the fowls of the air lodged in the branches of it." By this parable Jesus taught the magnificent growth of his Church from small things to great, from which the people from the four quarters of the globe might find good.

Then Jesus spoke the parable of leaven, and taught a similar lesson as above, that his kingdom, as leaven, would multiply and fill the earth. These last two parables were very inspiring to his disciples and a thrust at his opposers.

After the healing in the synagogue of the infirm woman and the resumption of his discourse, Jesus began to go from place to place teaching. Indeed, his entire teaching and work of Perea were itinerary. He had no familiar friendships in Perea, nor haunts; and he only went thither to conduct a very brief work of a few days, and because he had finished his Galilean ministry. He now sets his face toward Jerusalem, near by which he is to visit his friends at Bethany.

As he journeys with his disciples, some one asked, "Lord, are there few that be saved?" Jesus replied, "Strive to enter in at the strait [tedious] gate; for many, I say unto you, will seek to enter in and shall not be able." The strait gate here would suggest the difficulties against which

one must fight and the obligations to be consistent in Christian character.

Jesus shows that if the life is idly passed off and the character sullied, the master is, in such a time, liable to call to account, and if the servant be not ready, his Lord will, meantime, shut the door against him. Then will all anxiety of knocking prove useless; for the only answer will be, "I know you not." Jesus further teaches that no amount of previous labor will be a cause of justifying the unfaithful man, though that labor be the intimacy of eating and drinking in the Divine presence. All such may expect is to be driven out to weeping and gnashing of teeth. These last-quoted words are evidently a thrust at the Jews, who had not been watchful, and had not guarded their own Scriptures' relative to the Messiah. Therefore Jesus said to them, Ye shall see Abraham and Isaac and Jacob and all the prophets in the kingdom of God, and you yourselves thrust out. And behold, there are last which shall be first, and there are first which shall be last.

#### SECTION J.—JESUS WARNED AGAINST HEROD.

While we call the statement of the Pharisees to Jesus concerning Herod a warning, it is hardly such in a true sense; for the Pharisees were no friends to Jesus. Yet warning is always a friendly act. The Pharisees came to Jesus, and said, "Get thee out, and depart hence; for Herod will kill thee." Behind this is the real Pharisee, who did not speak to have the life of Jesus preserved; for they envied and wished him death everywhere. What did they want? It was to hasten Jesus on, perhaps, from their parts, so he would not uncover their sins, and on to Jerusalem, where they knew that death awaited him.

But Jesus calmly replied: "Go ye, and tell that fox [Herod], Behold, I cast out devils, and I do cures to-day

and to-morrow; and the third day I shall be perfected. Nevertheless I must walk to-day and to-morrow and the day following; for it can not be that a prophet perish out of Jerusalem."

This language of Jesus is only parabolic, and tells of the manner of his death, which he shows must occur at Jerusalem, and not by Herod, since Jerusalem was bent on this cruel outrage. And as Jesus thinks of his death in the great city, he weeps over it, calling it by name, and said, "Often would I have gathered thy children together as a hen doth gather her brood under her wings, and ye would not." Then he shows the desolation of their house, and that because they had utterly driven him, their Savior, away.

#### SECTION 18.—JESUS AT BETHANY.

Luke x, 38-42.

Jesus has been traveling considerably of late, and teaching in parts of Perea; but we last had him in a journey toward Jerusalem. He has finally reached the great city, and, as usual when in Jerusalem, he visits his dear friends at Bethany, a small village out east, where he is entertained by the beloved Mary, Martha, and Lazarus. It is about the middle of December. On this occasion it is said by Luke that Martha received Jesus into her house, which statement seems to suggest that Martha was in charge, and hence, the older. This thought is further confirmed by Martha having all the home cares upon her, while Mary sat at the feet of Jesus, gaining knowledge. Martha, in the midst of her cumbersome duties, cried out in complaint, "Lord, dost thou not care that my sister hath left me to serve alone? Bid her therefore that she help me." But Jesus, ever more concerned about eternal interests than perishable ones, spoke gently, yet plainly, to Martha. He said: "Martha, Martha, thou art careful and troubled about

many things; but one thing is needful, and Mary has chosen that good part, which will not be taken away from her." Martha was anxious about her Lord's earthly needs, while Mary wished to gain the living knowledge, which would not be taken from her; and Christ approved her course. This brings us a great lesson: Let go the world and all of its cares for the interests of the soul.

#### SECTION 19.—JESUS AT JERUSALEM.

John x, 22-29.

As was the custom of Jesus when at Bethany, he always went into the city to teach in the temple. Thus we have him, on this occasion, taking advantage to enter the city, during the feast of dedication, to discourse among the people. Jesus always sought populous occasions to teach. All his other visits prior to this were in April and October, but now he comes in late December to that dedication. We have had Jesus attending two other feasts prior to this; viz., that of the Passover and the Tabernacles, which we have explained. But now we reach a new one; hence a word of explanation. The dedication feast was instituted by Judas Maccabæus in commemoration of his purifying the temple after it had been defiled by Antiochus Epiphanes. It began on the 25th of the month Cisleu (which answers to the 18th of our December), and lasted eight days. Jesus, on this occasion, showed himself in Solomon's porch. As he stood, the Jews approached to ask him, "If thou be the Christ, tell us plainly." Jesus answered, "The works that I do in my Father's name, they bear witness of me." And this was and is even to-day the best witness man has. If a man's works are continually evil, the heart, which is the source of the issues of life, is wrong; but if the labors are good, then the man is good.

The works of Jesus fully vindicated his claims and es-

tablished him the Messiah. To observe his works was to recognize him the Sent of God. The only reason why one should fail to see Jesus as the Anointed One was the fact that he was not of the fold of Christ; for all the sheep of the fold both know and hear the Good Shepherd's voice and follow him. Besides, the Shepherd giveth his life to save his sheep, and will save them without perishing. And the ground of the salvation of his sheep is that they will be upheld by the Father and himself, who is equal to the Father.

#### SECTION A.—THE JEWS WOULD STONE JESUS.

John x, 30-39.

The Jewish mind could stand to hear Jesus claim intimacy with the Father, but when he claimed identity they were enraged and gathered up stones to destroy him. But Jesus appeals to their consciences by again referring them to his good works. These were many, in the name of the Father. So he asked, "For which of these good works do ye stone me?" What a Christian lesson is here—that we always be able to point to only good and many works in God's name! The blinded Jews replied, "We do not stone thee for good works, but for blasphemy." They accused Jesus of blasphemy when he said, "I and my Father are one." But this was no blasphemy, but the eternal truth; for he and the Father were verily one. But, to justify himself, Jesus replies: "Is it not written in your law, I said ye are gods?" Now it is clear, if he called them gods to whom the Word of God came, that they should not say he whom the Father hath sanctified and sent into the world blasphemed because he said, I am the Son of God. Jesus proposed that he be not believed if he did not good and Divine works; then urged that the works be believed in case of his rejection. But when he had pushed his claim to unanswerable propositions, his enemies tried again



to arrest him; but this was a time when he escaped their cruel hands and went his way. We do not know just how Jesus avoided his enemies, but he used to advantage the crowds or some Divine disappearance.

#### SECTION 20.—JESUS AT BETHANY BEYOND JORDAN.

John x, 40-42.

It is now very late in December, A. D. 29. Jesus left the city of Jerusalem, in the previous section, under threats and attempts of arrest because he claimed identity with the Father. He left Jerusalem after the Feast of Dedication, and again crossed the Jordan eastward.

Now, for the first time since his baptism, he revisited his old baptismal place where John baptized him. He spent some time hereabout, though we know not just how, or where, or why. He doubtless had some friends of the Baptist or of some others where he made his first disciples. It is supposed he stopped with these. Jesus could not be alone, however, and would not be idle. He labored in some religious way; for many visited him, and declared all John said of Jesus was indeed true. And because they believed John's words, and learned of Jesus, they believed on him.

## CHAPTER VII.

### ACTS AND WORDS OF THE LAST THREE MONTHS OF JESUS.

#### SECTION 1.—JESUS IN PEREA.

**A**FTER some days about his baptismal place, Jesus returns into Perea, where he was during the most of December. It is now about January. A. D. 30, and Jesus is fast approaching his end of life and labor, having only about three months more to live.

He spends some time of this month (January) in these parts, and labors; but, as before, at no settled place. His life grows anxious and abundant in labors as he approaches his end.

#### SECTION A.—JESUS DINES WITH A PHARISEE AND HEALS THE DROPSY.

LUKE XIV, 1-14.

We frequently read in the Gospels of the Pharisees inviting Jesus to dine; yet we know that they were his avowed enemies. How is this to be accounted for? First, it was to seek some act or word of Jesus by which they might entrap him—these meals furnished an occasion if Jesus would be off his guard: but he was always watching. Second, it was truly Pharisaic which was ostentatious. The Pharisees were ever anxious for worldly praise and to get Jesus to join their mode of living and doctrine. The meals gave a chance to approach Jesus on this line, or an oc-

casation of worldly fame. As Jesus passes on in Perea, a noted Pharisee invited him to dine. It was on a Sabbath, and, doubtless, after some synagogue service. Jesus accepted the invitation, and when he went they watched him. There was a man there with dropsy, and perhaps he was only called to get an occasion against Jesus; for the enemies knew Jesus would be in sympathy with this invalid. Jesus at once asked the religious rulers and Pharisees, "Is it lawful to heal on the Sabbath-day?" But, that they might find a fault, they held their peace; so Jesus healed the dropsy and let the man go. Then, as before, he asked a strong question, which showed that, though they found fault with him for healing that man on the Sabbath, yet they would pull out of a pit an ass or ox on the Sabbath.

Here Jesus began to teach the people against Pharisaic pride—that, when bidden to an occasion, to take the inferior room or seats till invited higher, for fear some higher in rank is bidden, and the bidder ask you down. Jesus then refers to a prepared dinner or supper, and enjoins not to invite any who will make a reciprocal invitation. He enjoins to call classes who can not return invitations, such as the poor, maimed, lame, and blind; for these God will reward at the resurrection.

## SECTION B.—JESUS SPEAKS THE PARABLE OF THE GREAT SUPPER.

Verses 15-24.

After Jesus spoke against Pharisaic ostentation, and showed the proper action relative to the poor, some one in the meal said, "Blessed is he that shall eat bread in the kingdom of God." Then this remark led Jesus to speak the above parable. It is interesting to read this parable and note its lessons to us.

The certain man who made this great supper repre-

sents Jesus bidding the many to come to him for the bread and water of life. The servant sent to invite the many represents the ministering servant of Christ. The all ready things of the supper represent the ready graces to save all believers. This part of the parable was a lasting thrust at the Jewish Pharisees, who had had all things prepared for them in the Divine plan of salvation, and to them had been sent God's Servant in Christ Jesus, besides many prophets; but to all they turned deaf ears.

But we note the folly of the invited. They all, with one consent, began to make excuse. The most interesting part of this parable is the groundlessness of excuses. Let us note: The first said, "I have bought a piece of ground, and I must needs go and see it." The second said, "I have bought five yoke of oxen, and I go to prove them." And the third said, "I have married a wife, and therefore I can not come." The first thing to note, in seeing the frivolity of the excuses, is to observe that this feast was a supper, and the supper meals of the ancients of those days were late at night, sometimes as late as nine and ten o'clock. Now, when a man says, I wish to go and see land at such hours of night, and uses it as a reason for not coming to an invitation, it simply shows that he has no excuse, since no man will go to examine land at night. The same can be said of the man who bought the oxen. He could not try them well at the late, dark hour. And as to the third, who had married a wife, certainly he could not have had a more desirable invitation and place to go with his young bride. And since he did not go, it is plainly evident that he did not wish to go. The spiritual lesson in this whole parable amounts, in substance, to this: That no man is away from Christ except through his own will. He has no excuse. When the servant showed this to his lord, he was angry at such excuses; so he said to his servant, "Go out quickly into the streets and lanes of the

city, and bring in hither the poor, and the maimed, and the halt, and the blind." The servant obeyed, and reported still there was room. Then he sent the servant into the highways and hedges, to compel them to come in, that his house might be filled; for he said that none of these men which were bidden should taste of his supper.

But this parable has a reference, all through, to the rejecting Jews. They really had no grounds on which to reject Christ, and their refusals to come to him were groundless, as it is with every sinner. Yet, while they rejected Jesus, they but incurred the displeasure of God, and caused the grace of God to go to the poor and blind Gentiles, and these will come to Christ by force of his cross, since he declares, "If I be lifted up, I will draw all men unto me." The all men who will believe will find recognition, and the stubborn shall never taste the great feast.

#### SECTION C.—REQUIREMENTS OF DISCIPLESHIP.

Verses 25-35.

The multitudes on this occasion, as ever before, attend the tread of Jesus, and he spoke of what was necessary for each one to become to be a true disciple. He gave them to understand that they could not become his followers and at the same time hold to worldliness; but even earth's dearest ties must be parted with. The father, mother, wife, children, brothers, sisters, and one's own life must be less loved and heard than Jesus. To be a disciple, one must take up his cross, or all Christian duties, daily. The true discipleship requires premeditation that will count up the cost of requirements, as the builder and the kingly warrior. True discipleship requires, not only a giving up all for Christ, in love and obedience, but that the life be a sacrifice offered to God for service such as is holy and acceptable.

## SECTION D.—PARABLE OF THE LOST SHEEP AND LOST SILVER.

Luke xv, 1-10.

It must not be forgotten that Jesus is still in Perea, and, owing to this section not being the one in which much of his ministry was, as in Galilee, we have seen that Jesus had little acquaintance and familiarity. This caused the little while he spent to be always in travel. It is, therefore, hard to locate him. So, in this opening verse, we have only, "Then drew near unto him publicans and sinners to hear him." This was a bad class of roughs and villains. Nevertheless, Jesus suffered their approach, since he came to seek and to save that which was lost. He came "to draw all men unto himself." To this great Christian philanthropy the Pharisees and scribes raised objection thus, "This man receiveth sinners and eateth with them." This objection brought forth the parables above mentioned. These parables of the lost sheep and silver were spoken beautifully to justify the act of Jesus in receiving and eating with the worst classes of men. Jesus shows that a man will leave ninety-nine unstrayed sheep for one, which, when found and rescued from the wilds, causes great joy and rejoicing. Since a beast causes joy, it is well to rejoice over a living and immortal soul which has been found and rescued from the wilds of the devil, however vile. Heaven rejoices over a repenting sinner. Let earth take the pattern. The same lesson of the lost sheep is taught in the Parable of the Pieces of Silver. But the practical lesson might be noticed. Jesus came to save all men and identified himself with all men; so should we. He went about seeking the lost and rescuing the perishing. No one was beneath his notice. He freely mingled with all men; but not on sinful terms; so should we. The world can never be saved while the Christian is unidentified with



it, while the Christian feels that any man is too low or duty too debasing by which a soul may be brought to God. House-to-house work and eye-to-eye talk about eternal interests always do the most good in bringing men to God. Jesus did not only go about doing good, but to every place where he could do good and rescue the souls of men.

#### SECTION E.—PARABLE OF THE PRODIGAL SON.

Luke xv, 11-32.

Jesus is still in conversation with the publicans and sinners who drew near to him. He encouraged this class to come, and this he did regardless of the criticism of the Pharisees and scribes. Jesus has spoken of the joy with which heaven and angels exult over a sinner, and now he speaks this parable to stimulate and induce sinful returns to God. He begins by saying, "A certain man had two sons." Then he shows the course pursued by the younger. This course turns out unwise, wicked, and ruinous. And when this younger son saw his folly, wickedness, and ruin, he reasoned, through repentance, that he would return, confess, and seek not preferment, but the place of a hired servant. He did not only resolve, but went, acknowledged and confessed his errors. The result was that his father received him with rejoicings of friends in a great feast. He clothed the boy, and restored him, not to serfdom, but sonship. This beautifully touching parable, the most interesting of any Jesus uttered, was certainly no little encouragement to those publicans and sinners, whose characters were manifoldly bad. They may not have seen the full spiritual force of the parable as one now, but it was certainly clear enough to see its force. The characteristics of the son were familiar to them. He was disloyal and ungrateful. So were they. He was prodigal and riotous. So were they. He came to physical ruin and debasement.

So had they. Yet, in the face of all these evils, when he repented and returned, confessing to his father, he found forgiveness and restoration. This forgiveness and restoration, Jesus gave them to understand, have their spiritual signification. It was this signification he was offering them as penitents. He was the forgiving Father awaiting the return and confession of all sinners. He would receive any who come, regardless of their sins or the character of their sins. He would grant them sonship and a high seat among the just that need no repentance. This father of the prodigal received the son so affectingly. He saw him afar off, and had compassion, and ran and fell on his neck and kissed him. This affectionate father stands for Christ, and if sinful man can be so mercifully portrayed, what must be the portrayal of him who is all mercy and love toward sinners?

#### THE ELDER SON.

We only pause to bring out a few happy and profitable lessons from this elder son. He is not spoken of as prodigal or immoral, but he certainly shows humanity unmodified by grace. When the younger son came this older was in the field, probably at work or caring for the flocks. When he reached the house, at noon or evening, he heard the music and dancing over the younger, and asked a servant its meaning. The servant told him in a gladsome manner, but, to the surprise of the servant, the elder son grew angry. And jealousy and selfishness were at the bottom of this anger. Jealous, because his brother had returned and won the love of his father; selfish, because he wanted all the patrimony. These two evils, jealousy and selfishness, are dangerous to any heart, even the strongest. Keep them out on all occasions. He showed his anger. He would not go in to see his brother nor new friends. He complained, "Lo, these many years do I serve thee,

neither transgressed I at any time thy commandment; and yet thou never gavest me a kid. But as soon as this thy son was come, which hath devoured thy living with harlots, thou hast killed for him the fatted calf." But the father's reply was wise and dignified. It did not show anger for anger, since "soft words turn away wrath;" but he spoke: "Son, thou art ever with me, and all that I have is thine. It was meet that we should make merry, and be glad: for this thy brother was dead, and is alive again; and was lost, and is found."

#### SECTION F.—THE UNJUST STEWARD.

Luke xvi, 1-13.

\* When Jesus had finished his conversation with the publicans and sinners, he began to talk with his disciples, and spoke the Parable of the Unjust Steward. Jesus evidently spoke this parable to use well his time among them and to encourage true fidelity. He began to teach fidelity by speaking of a certain rich man, who could not attend all his business, but hired a steward, into whose hands he placed much business and servants. At some time some one accused the steward of infidelity in business; that he was misapplying his master's money.

The master, accordingly, called on him to account; meantime, threatening him with a dishonorable discharge. The steward, knowing himself to be guilty and conscience facing him, began to inquire, "What shall I do?" This question points out that he questions for the sake of position and gain. He hated to give up his office and its perquisites more than the office. He was not morally penitent, but legally and materially affected. He never once, it seems, thought of his moral baseness of theft. He only thought of material loss. How often men now falter at this point! When overtaken in disgrace, they only think of what position and gain they lose, and not once of moral damage.

If this steward had shown open confession, true penitence, and sought retention by offering satisfactory amends, there would have been some chance for him. But he does not do anything of the kind. He only thinks of self. I can not dig, and I am ashamed to beg. Pride, says the wise man, always goes before a fall, and he might have said, It ruins in a fall. It causes one to fall short of many blessings of humility. Now, instead of this steward trying to extricate himself from the evil already in his life, he adds to and becomes worse. And he sought others, to corrupt them. These were his master's servants, who owed various products for rent or revenue. He had often, no doubt, been in position to and had favored these servants. So he felt that they owed him some obligations. So he sought, upon expulsion, their favor for shelter, and, perhaps, food. He, also, to save himself as far as possible, sought them to account to him less than what they really owed their lord, allowing the unreported amounts to go in the name of the steward. The servants were reached, and entered a swindling business with their lord's money. The steward asked the first, "How much owest thou unto my lord?" He replied, "One hundred measures of oil." Then the steward said, "Take thy bill [or contract which had been signed in behalf of the master by this steward] and write fifty." It is plain that this steward wanted and did ask this servant to pay only one-half of what he really owed; for he owed a hundred measures of oil, and the steward urged that he quickly change it to fifty measures. This unreported rent would go on the steward's deficits. And to the second, who owed a hundred measures of wheat, he said, "Change your contract to fourscore." If there were many servants it would not take the steward long to make up, at the above rates, his entire shortage. He doubtless, though, must have misapplied a very large sum—beyond all his power to restore.

This act of the steward was basely immoral; for he was sinning and causing others to sin, in that they were misapplying their lord's goods, and that knowingly. Yet the lord or master of the steward commended the wisdom of the steward, though it was against himself.

Here Jesus gave a lesson, that his disciples should make friends of the worldly rich, since it is the wealth of this world that supports its temporalities. It was only a lasting friendship between these servants and the steward that enabled him to get them to change their employer's contracts to help him out of deep disgrace, and to open their doors for his reception. There is baseness in all of the steward's dealing; yet it is suggestive of a very important lesson, so far as this life goes.

Friendship may be base in itself, but its graces can never be censured in the recipients.

But the practical lesson which is the keynote in this parable is fidelity. And this fidelity is to be maintained at all times and under all circumstances. Fidelity must be in small matters before one can reach great ones. And if one, like the steward, is not faithful in small trusts, no one will grant great interests. And it is safe to say that if a man is unfaithful in worldly affairs, no one can trust him in heavenly.

#### SECTION G.—JESUS AND THE PHARISEES.

Luke xvi, 13-18.

Jesus makes here a general declaration, "That no man can serve two masters." Then he states the reasons why; and all history of human experience goes to prove this a true statement. Since man can not serve two masters—God and mammon—it is wisdom that he makes not himself servant to the false riches. But because Jesus made this unworldly declaration so contrary to man's worldly

nature, the haughty Pharisees criticised him. They did so because covetous and greedy. To their mockery, Jesus replied, "Ye are they which justify yourselves before men; but God knoweth your hearts; for that which is highly esteemed among men is abomination in the sight of God." One must not get the wrong idea here by concluding that Jesus opposes wealth; but rather he opposed the vain use of it, which would lead to sin and death, since it can not save from these. The real lesson Jesus is aiming to teach is humility and reliance upon the sure arm of salvation, and that nothing should equally engage the heart of man with that arm. It is the love of greed that God abominates, since it is the root of all evil.

Jesus continues: "The law and the prophets were until John [the Baptist]; since that time the kingdom of God is preached, and every man presseth into it. And it is easier for heaven and earth to pass, than one tittle of the law to fail. Whosoever putteth away his wife, and marieth another, committeth adultery; and whosoever marieth her that is put away from her husband, committeth adultery."

Jesus never more truly ripped up the Pharisees than here. They were the teachers and rulers of the people; and yet, in example, were greed-seekers and lovers, and prescribed contrary to the Word of God, that, for any cause, a man might divorce his wife and marry another; but Jesus shows here how absurd and far from the Divine law these things were. He clearly points out that divorce, as elsewhere, except for the cause he mentioned in his sermon, is contrary to God's will, and that it is adulterous to marry the divorced, saving for fornication. Jesus would and does emphasize this doctrine by declaring the steadfastness of the law, and points out that the law would be enforced in its original spirit in the new kingdom, and that men would press in for its legitimate claims.



## SECTION H.—THE RICH MAN AND LAZARUS

Luke xvi, 19-31.

Jesus continues to speak, and utters one of the most interesting parables of his life; namely, that of the poor man, Lazarus, and the rich man. There is no wonder that Jesus speaks this particular parable right on the back of what he had said in the previous section. There he showed that it is impossible to serve God and mammon. Now, in this parable, he will show the wisdom of serving God, and the folly of serving mammon.

Whether the characters of this parable ever existed or not is a question; but if so or not, the lesson is the same, and it does not invalidate parables whence they be drawn.

Jesus begins by mentioning a certain rich man; then tells how he fared in dress and diet. His dress and diet were royal. Yet it must be noticed that Jesus does not honor his memory enough to give his name. He is only "a certain rich man." But this is not the case when it comes to the poor man. There is a proper name given, it matters not what the noun Lazarus means. He thus mentioning this poor man is to be looked upon as a mark of honor—God will honor those who honor him. Jesus also states that this beggar Lazarus was laid, as was customary with the indigent, at the rich man's gate. Lazarus was also full of sores, which the dogs licked, while he contented himself with the crumbs which fell from the rich man's table.

However, Lazarus was a servant of God, and did not worship mammon. But the rich man failed to serve God, and was a lover of wealth. It excluded God from his heart; therefore it made him abominable in the eyes of God.

Jesus proceeds now to speak of the end of these two men, having spoken of their lives. And he again honors the poor man by putting him first. In life, the rich man

was always first, and is the first named in the parable. Indeed, the rich are always first in this life, but not always first in the coming life; for it often turns out that the last become first, and the first last. Jesus tells us, "It came to pass that the beggar died." He points out this humble child characteristically—the "beggar" died, not Lazarus died—"And the beggar was carried by the angels into Abraham's bosom." Thus we again see Lazarus honored by the angel hands and placed upon Abraham's bosom. Abraham's bosom signifies rest and happiness, and was appropriately shown as the seat of the beggar. No higher seat could be offered a Jewish eye. Jesus also tells us that the rich man died and was buried. It was a matter perfectly natural that he should be buried; for he had money for all bodily needs—to live, eat, and dress. Yet he had to die, and so did Lazarus; but by Lazarus being poor he, it seems, got no burial; at least Jesus does not so state. It is probable he was consumed by dogs and swine. If he were buried, Jesus would perhaps have said something of it; however, we must not go beyond what Jesus went. If his soul were saved, that was sufficient.

Jesus told us what became of Lazarus, and now he tells what became of the rich man. He went to hell; for "in hell he lifted up his eyes, being in torments." The objects of his vision were Abraham and Lazarus. This rich man then prayed to Abraham, in childlike language, Father Abraham, have mercy on me, and send Lazarus [whom he recognized], that he may dip the tip of his finger in water, and cool my tongue."

Abraham replied, as he spoke in parental language, "Son, remember that thou in thy lifetime receivedst thy good things, and likewise Lazarus evil things: but now he is comforted, and thou art tormented." Then the fatherly Abraham gave him to understand that each world is separate and distinct, and that there is no interpassage to

regulate or change the destinies of either. And all petitions must be denied, and each soul must accept the lot it chose in the flesh. Then the rich man asked that Lazarus be sent to the earthly house of his father and warn his brothers to not follow him, since he was in a place of torment. But Abraham again replied, "They have Moses and the prophets; let them hear them." The rich man remonstrated, "Nay, Father Abraham; but if one went unto them from the dead they will repent." To this reply Abraham gives us a knowledge of God's Word, "If men are not moved by it, no other agency can arouse them, though that be a returned spirit from the dead." This interesting parable must not be closed without this remark, that life is the only time to pray; if we are not saved here there is no future probation or repentance. We should make here God our Savior; for he alone can save in death, when wealth and all friends give way.

#### SECTION I.—JESUS TEACHES HIS DISCIPLES.

Luke xvii, 1-10.

Jesus now turns his attention to his disciples, and begins to teach them. His first lesson was concerning offenses. He taught them that it is impossible to prevent them against his followers; but the offender will always share a woeful fate. So terrible will be his condition, always, that he would be better off with a millstone about his neck in the sea. The weakest mind understands that there are no chances for a man in the sea with a heavy millstone tied to his neck; yet his chances for escape are better than the chances of the offender. How careful then ought every one be that he in no way offend one of the least of God's children! Offenses to the children are taken as against God. He says, "Whatsoever ye do to one of his least, ye do it also to him."

The second lesson is regarding trespass and forgiveness. The full force of trespassing and forgiving has been brought out in the Sermon on the Mount; therefore Jesus does not discuss it at length here. However, he does call attention to the times of trespass and forgiveness. He needed to teach his disciples against the narrow, Jewish ideas as to how much or how often. He places forgiveness as often as sins are confessed. He makes it our first duty to rebuke the offender, and if he repent, there can be no limit to forgiveness; and this is like Jesus, who is long forbearing and patient. But when Jesus peculiarly urged such boundless forgiveness, his disciples seemed to think it hard to do; so they prayed, "Lord, increase our faith, or make us strong enough to do such by our fellow-man." But Jesus showed them that it is not so much faith needed to do such a Divine duty as often to forgive; but the faith only need be as a grain of mustard-seed; and such a proportion could say to the sycamine-tree, Be thou plucked up by the root, and be thou planted in the sea; and it should obey you. Thus Jesus would have his disciples know it is no great task to follow him in the spirit of forgiveness. Only a little faith can remove the mountains of any and all difficulties from us.

Jesus, thirdly, teaches man's dependence upon God—that man can claim no good in himself or merit. This Jesus illustrates by the servant just from the field. He is not told at once to gird himself and sit down to meat, but rather to serve. And for his service to his master he is not to receive any special gratitude, since he is employed for all he does. So with God. When all our duties of faith and good works are done, we must not claim merit or goodness. God alone is good; and were it not his Spirit always in us prompting us, we would never do a good deed or think a good thought. So when good thoughts arise, or prosperity attends us to accomplish anything good, there is no

honor to man or any exacting gratitude of the Almighty; for were it not for him, man would ever fail and fall far short of every meritorious deed.

SECTION 2.—JESUS AT BETHANY. HE RAISES LAZARUS FROM THE DEAD.

John xi, 1-46.

We last had Jesus, in January, in Perea. He is now again at Bethany, near Jerusalem. It is now the second month of his last year, or the month of February, A. D. 30. Jesus reached Bethany this time under an ardent call of two of his best friends—Mary and Martha, the sisters of Lazarus, who was dead. We pause, however, and let John tell how Jesus came to Bethany on this occasion. While Jesus was still in Perea, Lazarus became sick, and he grew worse unto death; but before he died, Mary and Martha sent for Jesus, informing him that his beloved Lazarus was sick. They felt that if Jesus heard about Lazarus, he would come to see him, and that his presence could heal him. Jesus, however, did not go at once, but tarried in Perea, and said to his disciples, "This sickness is not unto death, but for the glory of God, that the Son of God might be glorified thereby." Jesus remained two days where he was before leaving. He did this because he was the Great Physician and Master of death, and knew he needed not to hasten; for he could heal if breath barely remained, and could raise from the dead if death had come. But when the two days were expired, Jesus said to his disciples, "Let us go into Judea again." The disciples replied, "Master, the Jews of late sought to stone thee; and goest thou thither again?" These disciples well remembered the attempt, not quite two months prior, to stone Jesus; and they thought it was neither safe nor wise to go back among his Judean enemies. But Jesus gave them to understand



that if any man walk in the day or in the light of duty, depending upon God, he would not stumble or perish; rather, he who walks in the darkness of his own sinful ways is the one who perishes. Some one has truly said, "Man is immortal till his work is done." This certainly was the case with the blessed Christ: for often he was assailed; and men would have ended his life if they could have, but they could not. The pure and faultless life of Jesus was the day of truth; and he never stumbled or fell while his Father's duties were before him. Then Jesus spoke mysteriously to his disciples, "Our friend Lazarus sleepeth: but I go, that I may awake him out of sleep."

The disciples certainly did not understand Jesus; for while he spoke of the real death of Lazarus, they thought he meant physical sleep. They said, "Lord, if he sleep, he shall do well." The death of the saints is often spoken of as a sleep, since they are only temporarily in the grave; hence the resurrection is the basis of the Christian religion. Christ, moreover, is the resurrection, and will bring his people again from the dead.

But when Jesus saw that his disciples misunderstood him, he spoke plainly, "Lazarus is dead;" and then expressed gladness that he was absent for their sakes, to the end that he might strengthen their faith. He knew what he would do, and that the miracle of raising Lazarus would strengthen them.

When Jesus showed a determined purpose to go, Thomas Didymus called upon his fellow-disciples to go, even to die, if necessary, with Jesus. When Jesus reached Bethany, he found that Lazarus had not only been dead, but lain in the grave four days. It seems that Lazarus died the day Jesus was sent for. A day was perhaps spent by the messenger going and one in returning. Then Jesus, remaining two days after hearing of the sickness, must have left the afternoon of the fourth day, and spent the



night somewhere on the road, arriving at Bethany early on the fifth day. This is my belief. Certainly no one knows how this matter was, and John only says, "Had lain in the grave four days already."

Bethany being near to Jerusalem, and this family being highly respected, many Jews went out to weep with and comfort the sisters.

At some hour in their bereavement word reached the sisters that their Lord had come. Martha at once went out to meet him in, perhaps, the outskirts of Bethany; while Mary sat still. Martha's first words were, knowing Jesus had heard of the death of their brother: "Lord, if thou hadst been here, my brother had not died. But I know that even now, whatsoever thou wilt ask of God, God will give it thee." Jesus spoke; and his first words brought hope, as he always does, "Thy brother shall rise again." But Martha thought Jesus spoke away off. So many souls make this mistake! Jesus is a present help in the time of trouble; and when we are in trouble, he never speaks distantly. Martha had some knowledge of a resurrection of the dead at the end of probation, and thought Jesus was confined to this time; but Jesus assured her that he is the resurrection, and not only so, but whosoever believeth him, though he were dead, yet shall he live and never die. What tidings of inexpressible joy was this to Martha! She had supreme hope in expectation; but, to test her faith and strengthen it, Jesus asked, "Do you believe what I say?" Martha replied, "Yea, Lord; I believe that thou art the Christ, the Son of God, which should come into the world." When Martha was cheered and strengthened, she went back for Mary, and said, "The Master is come, and calleth for thee." Then Mary went out to the same suburbs, and, coming to Jesus, fell at his feet, using the same language Martha used. Both sisters felt that Jesus could have saved them their sad bereavement if he had

been with them. Certain friendly Jews followed Mary, thinking she had gone to the grave; and they, too, came to where Jesus was. And Mary's weeping, with that of her friends, was too much for the tender heart of Jesus. Soon he began to groan in spirit, and was troubled; and he asked, "Where have ye laid him?" They said unto him, "Lord, come and see." Then the big tears began to fall from the eyes of Jesus; so moved was he. The magnificent love of Jesus ever shows itself in trial. The Jews exclaimed, "Behold, how he loved him!" Others began to question, "Could not this man, which opened the eyes of the blind, have caused that even this man should not have died?" Jesus was more and more affected by his love for Lazarus and the screams of his sisters. He was the only medium of relief. He knew all were looking to him. He again groaned in himself, and went to the grave. He then spoke again, "Take away the stone;" but Martha, not seeming to understand yet her Lord, objected to any interference of the body, alleging that it would only give offense, since he had been buried four days. Jesus then called Martha's attention to what he had already told her, that, if she believed, she should see the glory of God. How quick man forgets the promises of God! Yet no one promises so faithfully and abundantly as Jesus. Martha finally yielded, and the stone was removed. Then Jesus lifted up his eyes, and said, "Father, I thank thee that thou hast heard me. I knew that thou hearest me always; but because of the people which stand by I said it, that they may believe that thou hast sent me." After this talk with the Father, Jesus cried out, "Lazarus, come forth!" And Lazarus came forth, bound hand and foot with grave clothes or sheets. Jesus commanded, "Loose him, and let him go." This was an unquestionable miracle. It was a resurrection from the grave, where all possible life had

flown. It was before the eyes of friends and foes. It was in broad daylight. It had its effect: many of Mary's Jewish friends believe on Jesus; but John does not specify any, perhaps because they were too many. Yet there was an unbelieving class who did not accept this stupendous miracle, but went into the city to speak against it, and told the Pharisees all that Jesus did.

### SECTION 3.—JESUS AT EPHRAIM.

*John xi, 47-57.*

We last had Jesus at Bethany, where he raised Lazarus from the dead and in such manner that the act was doubtless his most wonderful miracle. We observed that the great act led many of the friends of Mary and Martha and others to believe in Jesus and become his disciples. But others who did not believe reported the whole matter to the Pharisees, who at once took counsel against Jesus to destroy him. They raised such questions: "What do we? for this man doeth many miracles." "If we let him alone, all men will believe on him; and the Romans shall come and take away both our place and nation." These questions and statements were proofs of the great effects of the Christian miracles. They point out, also, the jealousy and prejudice of the Pharisees. What harm was there in raising Lazarus, or in any of the miracles? They were all Divinely wrought for human welfare. Caiaphas, the high priest, stated to the council: "Ye know nothing at all; nor consider that it is expedient for us that one man should die for the people, and that the whole nation perish not." Caiaphas, like many men, did not know what he said, and did not say what he really meant, that Jesus should die for the people. His language was rather a boast that Jesus would and should certainly be put to death, not

for the people, but rather for the sake of envy. But, after all, his prophecy was true, and Jesus, in accordance with all true prophecy, did die for the people, and to gather in one the children of God that were scattered abroad. John tells us that, from that day forth, they sought opportunity to put Jesus to death. They felt that death was the only way to end his influence, and thereby hold their own deceptive prestige with the deluded people. Though it were quite two months before they were able to lay their murderous hands on him, still they would have done so, and agreed to do so at any opportunity. On account of this determined counsel to kill him at the first opportunity, Jesus left Bethany and went to Ephraim, a country village near the wilderness. This being a small, out-of-the-way place, situated in the neighborhood of Bethel, about twenty miles north of Jerusalem, afforded a kind of retreat where Jesus could spend some quiet in further teaching his disciples.

As Jesus left Bethany in flight with his disciples, he did not work any miracles, nor do any public teaching in Ephraim. He wished seclusion and quiet till his time should come to close up his life work.

It is now about the first of March, A. D. 30; and the Passover feast is near. The people are beginning to go on ahead of the feast for purification and other preparations. As many from all country parts came to the city, and Jesus not showing up early, as mostly he did, his enemies began to ask, "What think ye, that he will not come to the feast?" So anxious were they to arrest Jesus and put him to death, that even the chief priests and Pharisees gave commands that no one should hide Jesus, but tell where he was, that he might be taken, they would say, for the public good. Yet they had not the public good at heart, but their own envious prejudice to serve by putting Jesus to death.

## SECTION 4.—JESUS WHILE JOURNEYING HEALS TEN LEPERS

Luke xvii, 11-19.

There is considerable question regarding this journey from Ephraim through the borders of Samaria and the healing of the ten lepers, whom we place in this journey. Some would place the healing of the lepers between the Feasts of Tabernacles and Dedication, but there is no good reason for this; hence we place the leper-healing in this bordering visit of Samaria. However it be considered, we know Jesus was journeying, and that toward Jerusalem, though he did not reach directly this city for several days, or before the Passover in April. As he journeyed, he entered an unknown village, in whose borders ten lepers met him. The lepers were always isolated on account of their loathsome disease, which was incurable. So dreadful was their disease that they were forced to cry out, "Unclean!" whenever any one was approaching. So, at a distance, they, in some way, heard that Jesus was passing, and they lifted their voices and prayed, "Jesus, Master, have mercy on us!" Immediately upon beholding them, Jesus was touched with pity. It was a pitiable object to see ten men huddled with loathsome leprosy, and cast out. Jesus was always touched by human woe and misery. He heard their cry, and decided at once to answer their petition. He said, "Go, show yourselves unto the priests." This command was in keeping with the usual Jewish law, which made the priests judges in matters of cleanness and uncleanness. These poor wretches certainly had one of two things, or both. They either had great faith in Jesus, to start at once to the priest without healing, believing they would be healed; or they had the actual healing, and started to be so declared by the physical judge. They doubtless, however, started off upon the ground of faith; for they did not realize the healing till they had departed; for, as they went,

they were cleansed. One of the ten was so overjoyed at his cleansing that he refrained from going to the priest till after he had returned to his benefactor to give thanks for such wondrous favor. What made his gratitude so remarkable was that he was a Samaritan, and obnoxious to the Jew who healed him. He expressed his thanks by falling at the feet of Jesus in the attitude of a worshiper. He felt that the burden of gratitude should be discharged prior to all other duties, and, true, it should in every case.

Jesus asked: "Were not ten cleansed? But where are the nine?" None returned to thank God but the stranger. How base this was! After healing of an incurable malady, and that without price, they were not grateful enough even to give thanks. But God is doing much more for men now than for those lepers; yet they do not thank him in act, word, or in any other way. They go on as a blinded horse, saying, "My arm has brought salvation near;" "By my strength or wisdom I have benefited myself in this or that measure;" but not so: it is God who prospers us.

#### SECTION 5.—JESUS IN PEREA. HE DISCOURSES WITH HIS DISCIPLES.

Luke xvii, 20-37.

Jesus is still, to some extent, in flight. He has not been back to Jerusalem since his enemies plotted to put him to death for the sake of his great fame won by raising Lazarus to life. We saw that he went to Ephraim, thence took a journey through the borders of Samaria, and now we again have him beyond the Jordan in Perea, where he discourses about his kingdom on earth. The question of the kingdom sprung up through the worldly-minded Pharisees, who only thought of and hoped, through the Messiah, a temporal and material kingdom. They demanded of Jesus, "When shall the kingdom of God come?" Jesus replied,



"The kingdom of God cometh not with observation." This was what they expected and wished to see: a kingdom of royalty, iron power, and all-subduing. All these features were to be about the Christian kingdom, but all in spiritual nature. All were to be invisible in event. No one could locate this kingdom as being here or there; for it would be in men. It is not a kingdom of parts, but of principles of truth and righteousness.

Jesus then turned to speak of himself, and said to his disciples that, though he should be rejected by his countrymen, yet, for such ingratitude, the time would come when such calamities would come upon the Jews, that even his disciples would desire him in the flesh, to deliver them from the enemy's hand. This possible deliverance Jesus calls a day of the Son of man. Jesus also pointed out that men would seek him here and there; but he said, Go not after those who would claim to find him; for they could not find him when he would hide his face on account of their sins.

Jesus points out the calamities to come upon the Jewish race as swift lightnings from the east, which shine to the west. He intimates the ingress and rapid spread of the Roman army over the land of the Jews. Yet he assured his disciples that none of these judgments would come prior to his death, known as "the suffering many things and the being rejected of that generation." Jesus pointed out the fact that the Jews would be so rebellious and unbelieving that the judgments of God would take them unaware, or as the floods and fires overtook the wicked in the days of Noah and Lot; for the antediluvians and the Sodomites were unthoughtful of the Divine judgments till they began to fall, when it was too late. Jesus pointed out that the judgments of the rejecting Jews would be so stupendous and sudden that one would not have time to look for anything but dear life. There would be

time for nothing but flight, and if any undertook more, they would be as Lot's wife, who lost life by trying to save it; but, on the other hand, if any, through faith, would seek to obey and lose the present life, should find it. Jesus further points out that the Jewish calamities would be so severe and sudden that in no case even two together would be able to escape from the bed or the mill; for one would certainly be taken if but two. The disciples asked, "Where, Lord?" Jesus replied that wherever the bodies would be, thither would be gathered the eagles or Roman soldiers, who were to inflict these judgments. This Perean discourse is important for a few facts: First, it is a prophecy which has been all fulfilled concerning the Jews; second, it points out that man can not reject Jesus and do well. "But the soul that sinneth, it shall die." The death will be both physical and spiritual. God can not look upon any sin with a degree of allowance; hence every soul should aim at loyalty, faith, and obedience.

#### JESUS CONTINUING HIS PEREAN DISCOURSE, SPEAKS PARABLES.

Luke xviii, 1-14.

Some of the best opportunities ever offered Jesus for discourse were granted in Perea; and hence, while here, we get some of his best and most lengthy discourses. While here, Jesus had not the prejudice he had in Judea, nor the crowds he had in Galilee; hence his opportunity to speak. At this juncture he speaks parables. It is first of the

#### UNJUST JUDGE.

He prefaces his parable by these remarks, "Men ought always to pray, and not faint." This statement is very suggestive, coming, as it does, from Jesus. It points out hu-

man depravity and dependence, since men ought always to pray to God for what they themselves can not have. The remark leads us into our relation to God—his creatures and children, whom he needs to help, and will help, if sought. It points out the necessity of always coming to God, and of being importunate.

Now, to bring out the necessity and importunity of prayer, Jesus represents a judge and widow. The judge was unrighteous. He feared not God, nor regarded man. Certainly he was a very unsuitable character for his almost sacred trust. The widow, as is often the case, had a grievance, and came to the judge for vindication, and not for revenge, as the authorized reading seems to suggest. This woman only wanted justice and right done in her case; hence she had the temerity to come often. The unrighteousness of the judge is seen in that he would not vindicate the widow till he found she would be an annoyance to him. Then, not for fear of the Judge of the universe, or for regard of men, but to avoid the crying presence of a lone woman, he consented to do her justice.

Jesus wishes to get a lesson here for his people. It is this, that they come often with all their grievances to God, their Heavenly Father, and he will vindicate their causes and supply them with all grace. He will not allow justice to lag, but will justify them speedily. Jesus closes this parable by a lone question; namely, "When the Son of man cometh [with judgments upon the Jews by the Romans, and at the end of time], will he find faith on the earth?"

This question is to suggest that faith in the Son would be all God would require to vindicate the righteous causes.

Here Jesus took up another parable concerning certain misguided and misleading Pharisees who felt that they could be righteous while despising others. To these he uttered the parable of the Publican and the Pharisee.

## PUBLICAN AND THE PHARISEE.

These two men went up into the temple to pray. The Pharisee stood and prayed. His attitude betrayed pride. He said, "God [and not Father], I thank thee that I am not as other men are." Here he betrays self-righteousness. Then he points out that other men are extortioners, unjust, adulterers, or even as this publican, who now prays in view. It may be that this self-righteous Pharisee was none of these characters; yet he was guilty of other sins equally as bad, and had no time to pull the mote out of other people's eyes when a beam was in his own eye. He and no other human being has any righteousness to plead or supererogatory merits to present to a just God. And any such human claim is surreptitious; for there is no merit but of Christ, and none good; no, not one. This Pharisee, after justifying himself as far as men's eyes go, began to plead his doings. "I fast twice a week; I give tithes of all that I possess." His fastings often and tithing were good and, no doubt, acceptable to God; but they could not atone, nor justify man's soul. And by this Pharisee they were done mostly as a secular duty, and not from the inward heart-motive to please God; and here lies the non-justification.

Jesus, then, took up the case of the publican. He stood in prayer, as also did the Pharisee. But his humility is seen in that he stood far away, and presented a dejected appearance—not so much as lifting up his eyes to heaven. He evidently felt his weight of condemnation, and that he had no righteousness to plead, and no one to speak of but his sinful self. His feeling was true, and his attitude acceptable to God, who never despises a broken heart and a contrite spirit. This man prayed, smiting his breast, indicating its anxiety and anguish. He said, as the Pharisee, "God;" both instances showing that Jesus had not yet revealed the parental relation of God to men. How differ-

ently and touchingly did Jesus bring out this relation when he taught it in prayer. The very first words at God's feet are, "Our Father," showing the Fatherhood of God and the brotherhood of man. The publican's prayer follows, "Be merciful to me—a sinner!" This prayer is noted for brevity and pointedness. He felt the need of pardoning mercy, and this is what he asked. He had no time to plead self-righteousness, or bring up other men's shortcomings. And because he did so pray and feel, he returned to his house justified, rather than the Pharisee. The humble soul, hungering and thirsting after righteousness, will always find a place with God and fullness of him.

#### JESUS CONTINUING HIS PEREAN DISCOURSE SPEAKS OF DIVORCE.

Matt. xix, 3-12; Mark x, 2-12.

The subject of marriage and divorce has always been, and always will be, a grave question under Christian institutions. This is, and will be, the case, since so much is involved from the human side and since man's Creator and Savior speaks out in no uncertain terms concerning it. The Jews had so legislated prior to Christ that divorces could be obtained for any cause. This law, however had the writing of Moses for its foundation; but this did not give it sanctity, because it was written by Moses through force of the hard-heartedness of the people, and not by him being Divinely led. Nevertheless there always was an undercurrent among the Jews which condemned such laxity, as well as some to encourage it; so it made the subject always a bone of contention, as it is now—some for and some against. The Pharisees felt that they had a chance to involve Christ in some way through this question; and they thought to try him. They came with a question, "Is it lawful for a man to put away his wife for every cause?" Now, if Jesus had said, Yes, he would

have had the unfavorable element to meet, and would have been accused of teaching lax morality. If he had said, No, he would have been accused of upsetting the civil and religious laws of the Jews, which had the Mosaic sanction, and would thus have caused the ruling and legal element to have more pretentious grounds for his arrest and murder. But Jesus was ever on his guard, and foreknew men. So he responded by asking a question. He asked them: "Have ye not read that he which made them at the beginning made them male and female, and said, For this cause shall a man leave father and mother, and shall cleave to his wife, and they twain shall be one flesh?"

Jesus, in his answer, rises higher than Moses, and answers not according to the narrow legislation of men. He shows that Moses is not authority in the matter of marriage and divorcement, but God. God made them male and female, and by marriage made them one and inseparable; and, having thus made them, they must remain, even abandoning father and mother to do so, and must not be separated by any device of men. Then Jesus gives the ground for divorce. It is adultery, and nothing else; and then declares, if persons separate for any other causes, and marry others, they are living in adultery. This is one of the hard restrictive rules of Jesus, and it catches many living in legalized adultery; but it is the only safe rule for moral, social, and civil development. It is sufficient to say that all divorce laws are man-made, except for infidelity; and every one is dangerous. Every one threatens the best and highest civilization, and will degrade it.

#### JESUS ACCEPTS AND BLESSES LITTLE CHILDREN.

Matt. xix, 13-15; Mark x, 13-16; Luke xviii, 15-17.

The act of Jesus here, receiving and blessing children over the protest of his disciples, is very significant, and requires more than passing notice. It is so significant that



three of the writers mention it, showing that it deeply impressed them. While Jesus stood or sat somewhere here in Perea, little children were brought to him for his blessing. The writers do not tell us who brought them, whether mothers, fathers, or friends. Luke says, "That he might touch them;" Mark, the same; but Matthew says, "That he should put his hands on them, and pray." When the children were brought, the disciples of Jesus rebuked those that brought them. Heretofore, as far as we know, Jesus had done nothing directly for children, and had given no special information as to their relation to his kingdom. How happy, then, ought we to be that he does now, only a few days before his death, tell us that they are of the kingdom! Jesus also tells us that it becomes necessary for the old to become as a little one, in order to enter the kingdom. The kingdom is composed of childlike characters; but, being ignorant of these facts, the disciples opposed the bringing of children. And with the opposition Jesus was much displeased, and said to his opposing disciples, "Suffer the little children to come unto me, and forbid them not; for of such is the kingdom of God. Verily, I say unto you, Whosoever shall not receive the kingdom of God as a little child, he shall not enter therein."

Certainly we get some lessons here from Jesus: First, that children are in the covenant of grace and members of the gospel kingdom; second, that we are so to receive them in all the covenants and institutions of grace; third, that Christ has set the seal of disapproval upon any opposition to receiving little ones into the Church; fourth, that every one must become humble and dependent like a child in order to find acceptance with God. When Jesus had finished his remarks, he took the little ones up in his arms, put his hands upon them, and blessed them.

## JESUS DISCOURSES WITH AND CONCERNING THE RICH.

Matt. xix, 16-30; Mark x, 17-31; Luke xviii, 18-30.

One thing is ever to be kept in mind regarding the Perean ministry of Jesus, and that is that he does and says nearly all things done and said by the wayside. As we observed, when he first left Galilee, his labors were not in Capernaum's homes of Peters, or synagogues; for they were not as in Galilee. In the previous paragraph, Jesus, at some unknown place, perhaps by the wayside or on some grassy plot, or at some house or synagogue, blessed little children. Then Matthew and Mark tell us he left there; and then came to him, evidently by the way, a rich young man, who engaged Jesus in conversation concerning eternal life. Luke says this man was a ruler, but does not specify the kind. Whether he was sincerely inquiring of life from Jesus is questionable; for he squirmed under the very first test and requirement of Jesus. He may have been testing the ability of Jesus to answer how to get eternal life. His running and kneeling to Jesus, and calling him "Good Master," were no proofs of sincerity, as some would have them. And the first reply of Jesus seems to point out the superficiality of this man's sincerity. He asked, "Good Master, what good thing shall I do that I may have eternal life?" Jesus does not go on at once to give him a direct answer, but questions him as to why he called him "Good Master." That is, "Where did you get the information that I am good? Who told it thee? What is your reason for it?" The young man doubtless felt that Christ was worthy of honor; and whether sincere about his soul or not, he, through gentlemanly manners, addressed Jesus as he felt he was worthy. While this attitude does not prove sincerity, yet it offers some good suggestions. First, this man came to Jesus. He is the only one whom men can approach for all good. Second, he inquired what to do to obtain eternal life. No

better inquiry was ever made; for all need life, and it is the highest wisdom to seek it to-day. Jesus tells the young officer what to do and not to do to find life. "If thou wilt enter into life, keep the commandments." This young man, having lived a very upright life, was inclined to think he had done all necessary commands; so he asked, "What commands do you mean?" Jesus replied, "Thou shalt not kill, nor commit adultery, nor steal, nor bear false witness. Thou shalt honor thy father and mother, and love thy neighbor as thyself." The young man still felt assured, and replied, "All these things have I kept from my youth up." Then he asked, "What lack I yet?" Jesus readily responded, as if to say, "You are nearly saved; but if you would be perfect or entirely saved, go and sell that thou hast, and give to the poor, and thou shalt have treasure in heaven, and come and follow me."

This last saying of Jesus was the test of this young man's sincerity. When heard, he went away in sorrow. The sorrow filled his heart, because he had much wealth, which he loved too dearly to part with for humble discipleship. He did not part with it to take up the cross of Jesus; and because he did not, Jesus was drawn out into further remarks. He turned and said to his disciples: "Verily, I say unto you that a rich man shall hardly enter into the kingdom of heaven. And again I say unto you, It is easier for a camel to go through the eye of a needle than for a rich man to enter into the kingdom of God." Jesus here certainly does not deprecate riches in the hands of his disciples, nor does he mean to say they can not be saved, but rather shall not be saved because of their love being centered, as the young ruler, upon their wealth to the exclusion of godliness. The expression, "Easier for a camel to go through the eye of a needle," is a common Jewish saying to mean a thing is impossible.

But the disciples were somewhat surprised at this state-

ment of their Master, and asked, "Who, then, can be saved, if the rich can not?" Jesus told them, "With men it is impossible, but not with God, with whom all things are possible."

Peter now, as usual, comes to the fore, and for himself and the other disciples declares, "We have forsaken all, and followed thee." Then he asked his Lord, "What shall we have therefor?" Jesus answered, not only Peter, but all: "Verily, I say unto you, That ye which have followed me in the regeneration, when the Son of man shall sit in the throne of his glory, ye shall sit upon twelve thrones, judging the twelve tribes of Israel. And every one that has forsaken houses, or brethren, or sisters, or father, or mother, or wife, or children, or lands for my name's sake, shall receive a hundred-fold, and shall inherit everlasting life." Jesus here shows the advantages of becoming his disciples—that one gets both the life that now is and that which is to come in exchange for the haunts and wrecks of sin. What marvelous gain came to those disciples! They left old, broken nets, wet, dangerous, and exposed lives to get immortal fame and life everlasting. So with every one. We may not reap at once; but the harvest of joy, victory, and glory will come in God's time.

#### JESUS SPEAKS OF THE LABORERS AND THE VINEYARD.

Matt. xx, 1-16.

Jesus, after speaking of wealth and its dangers, proceeds to speak to his disciples a parable whose end is to show God's past, present, and future relation to the Jewish race, and that he is in no sense dependent upon them for the progress of his kingdom, or obligated to do more for them, as the elect people, than for the latest savage Gentile. He begins, "The kingdom of heaven is like unto a man that is a householder, which went out early in the morning to hire laborers into his vineyard." The most

significant thoughts of this parable are its hours. This man first went out and hired men at our six o'clock, and agreed, that if they worked till six in the evening, to give them a penny. He went out a second time to the market-place, where laborers usually stood for employment, and at nine o'clock he hired others, contracting only to give them what was right. A third time he went out, and hired another crew at twelve o'clock, with whom he made a like contract as with those at nine, to give what would be right.

A fourth time he went out, and hired another crew at three o'clock, under a similar contract as all the above. And at five o'clock he went out a fifth time, and hired still others under the above contracts, to do by them whatever was right. At six o'clock the employer sent out his steward, saying, "Call the laborers, and give them their hire; beginning with the last hired, and pay on back to the first." The steward knew nothing of contracts, but was only given orders to pay every man a penny. So it turned out that the men who came at five and labored but one hour, till six o'clock, got their money first, and as much as the men who wrought twelve hours. But the first servants murmured, saying to the master, "These last have wrought but one hour, and thou hast made them equal unto us which have borne the burden and heat of the day." To this complaint the master replied: "Friend, I do thee no wrong. Didst not thou agree with me for a penny? Take thine, and go thy way. Is it not lawful for me to do what I will with mine own? Is thine eye evil because I am good?"

Many practical lessons are in this parable; but I think we are only in order to show what Jesus wants to teach. The first servants represent the Jewish nation, with the first call and privileges of God. All others represent the Gentile world in all times. Jesus wished to teach the Jews that though they were the Abrahamic seed and favored with the first call, yet they had rights to no more than the later



Gentiles who would believe on and labor faithfully in his Church. In other words, the believing Gentiles would reap the equal Divine rewards first; since the last will be first, and the first last.

All God's gifts and callings are through his sovereign mercy, and not by man's merits; therefore nothing that he does is because man deserves it, or because God is obligated to do it. Truly does Wesley sing:

"False and full of sin I am,  
Thou art full of truth and grace."

### JESUS AGAIN PREDICTS HIS DEATH.

Matt. xx, 17-19; Mark x, 32-34; Luke xviii, 31-34.

Jesus quite frequently spoke of his death; but never so near as at this time, and never under such trepidation as now. He is in a journey, and on his way to Jerusalem, but yet in Perea. It is in the latter part of March, and just a few days before his death is to occur. Jesus could no longer conceal the sad event, or speak of it indefinitely; but had to tell them plainly it will be at the end of this trip to the holy city. Mark tells us that the disciples were amazed and afraid. These disciples were so because of what their Lord said, and yet they could not understand him. They felt and believed that something unusual was going to happen; but what puzzled them, they could not understand how he should be put to death and rise again after three days. Nevertheless, they heard his solemn words: "Behold, we go up to Jerusalem; and the Son of man shall be betrayed unto the chief priests and unto the scribes; and they shall condemn him to death, and shall deliver him to the Gentiles to mock, and to scourge, and to crucify him: and the third day he shall rise again." Luke quotes Jesus as saying the things prophesied of his death would occur, thus showing that he referred them



for their understanding to their own prophets. O, how blind were those disciples, not to understand any of his pathetic sayings, when they had his previous warnings and their Isaiahs to tell them: "He hath borne our griefs, and carried our sorrows; he was wounded for our transgressions; he was bruised for our iniquities: the chastisement of our peace was upon him; and with his stripes we are healed. He was oppressed and he was afflicted, yet he opened not his mouth: he is brought as a lamb to the slaughter, and, as a sheep before her shearers is dumb, so he openeth not his mouth. He made his grave with the wicked, and with the rich in his death."

Nothing less than stupidity prevented the friends of Jesus, and nothing but prejudice prevented his enemies from understanding his prediction of death when they read the above prophecy. There was nothing plainer in the prophets than the event and end of the Messiah; yet men never misunderstood anything more than these two occurrences.

#### JAMES AND JOHN SEEK PREFERMENT.

*Matt. xx, 20-28; Mark x, 35-45.*

While Jesus is still on the way up to Jerusalem, but in Perea, beyond the Jordan, the mother of two of his early disciples, James and John, came to him, desiring a certain thing. We can see why this mother would come in behalf of her sons, and why she would worship in her request. Womanlike, she felt that Jesus would be influenced by her, and her presence would go far in soliciting an affirmative reply. Those ambitious sons had doubtless lately been about her, and got her to make this plea for them. "What is the certain thing?" Jesus asked. Encouraged by Jesus entertaining her, she readily replied, "Grant that these, my two sons, may sit, the one on thy right hand and the other on the left, in thy kingdom."

It does seem absurd for James and John to urge and accompany their mother to Jesus with any such request as this, when, just a little before, Jesus told them that he would be betrayed to the priests and scribes, and be put to death. But the explanation is in two things: First, they did not understand Jesus when he spoke of his death; and second, they expected an abiding Messiah, in an earthly kingdom of material parts. And it was for chief places they asked, here in this supposed earthly dominion. But this request shows how worldly, material, and ambitious were the two brothers. Jesus said to the three: "Ye know not what ye ask [that is, Ye do not understand what ye ask]. Are ye able to drink of the cup that I shall drink of, and to be baptized with the baptism that I am baptized with?" The two brothers foolishly answered, "We are able." Jesus replied, "Ye shall drink indeed of my cup, and be baptized with the baptism that I am baptized with: but to sit on my right hand, and on my left, is not mine to give; but it shall be given to them for whom it is prepared of my Father."

Jesus more than once referred to his death as a baptism. That is what he intends here by "cup" and "baptism." But his worldly-minded disciples thought he referred to some royal cup, and some such baptism as John the Baptist performed, and said they would be able to do the deeds. Jesus readily assured them that they would drink of his cup and be baptized with his baptism, or pass through the ordeal of suffering and death for his sake. And history tells us that James and John had their cup of sorrow, and at least James died an unnatural death as his Master and for his sake. Jesus gave them to understand that he would not distribute preferment, since he would have no earthly kingdom. But the sitting on his right hand, and left, would be left to the disposition of the Father in heaven above.

When the ten other disciples heard of this request of

James and John they were angry. This anger is quite natural, because they looked upon James and John as asking what was great, and what was possible for any two of them. They felt that these two brothers were seeking advantage of them with the Master. But Jesus harmonized the factions very readily by referring them to the customs of the Gentiles, that the princes exercise dominion over them, and the great exercise authority. Yet he gave them, as his disciples, to know this should not be the way with them; but if any wished to be great he must minister, and if chief let him serve. Then he called attention to the fact that though he was their Savior and Lord, yet he came to minister, and to submit to the humiliation of even washing their feet.

#### SECTION 6.—JESUS HEALS BLIND MEN ABOUT JERICH0.

Matt. xx, 29-34; Mark, x, 46-52; Luke xviii, 35-43.

Since Jesus, four months prior to this time, first came into Perea out of Galilee, he has not wrought many miracles anywhere, and but very few in Perea. His time for miracles was well-nigh over, and he spent it in teaching and preaching. Though, as he passes through Jericho on this his last trip to Jerusalem, he finds occasion once more to manifest his power miraculously. Two blind men are the subjects to be treated. Matthew, Mark, and Luke speak of them, though a little differently. Matthew speaks of them as two blind men; Mark only mentions one man, and calls him Bartimeus; while Luke only mentions one, giving no name. However, they all agree to a case of blindness. There is no disagreement, however, in these reports. One only noted how many; the other finds out the name of one, if not already known, and makes sure of that much, without giving more; the third thinks it sufficient to tell that his Master healed a blind man of his malady. They all agree that the miracle was wrought near Jericho, and as

Jesus was leaving the city *en route* to Jerusalem. These blind men sat by the wayside, as was customary in those days for the blind and helpless. They sat in the thoroughfares to beg alms of passers into and out from the city. When Jesus started out of the city, as usual, a great crowd followed for some considerable distance the Galilean prophet, of whom they had heard so much. Doubtless these blind men had friends who informed them of the passing of Jesus, and placed them by the way for an opportunity to call upon him. As Jesus came near they were determined not to miss their first and only chance to obtain sight. They cried loudly, "Have mercy on us, O Lord, thou Son of David!" The passers rebuked them that they should hold their peace. It is safe to say, whenever a soul attempts to go to Jesus the devil always has some opposing agencies to keep it back and in blindness of sin. But when a soul is truly conscious of sin and realizes its needs, no height or depth or principality can restrain the prayers that it makes to God. When these blind men were rebuked it only intensified their desires, and they prayed the more loudly, "Have mercy on us, O Lord, thou Son of David!" Jesus is never entreated in vain, nor fails to come when called, nor stop when asked. He stopped and stood still, and called the blind men who had called him. When they came, he asked them, as though he did not know, to strengthen their faith, "What will ye that I shall do unto you?" They quickly replied, "Lord, that our eyes may be opened."

Jesus never fails to do a good deed or answer a necessary prayer. He touched their eyes, now unsightly, and immediately they saw. Jesus had opened so many eyes to see, and now, on his way to death, to be shut in by the power of darkness, he gives sight, comfort, and joy to the benighted. Bless his holy name!

## SECTION A.—JESUS VISITS ZACCHEUS.

LUKE XIX, 1-10.

After Jesus had healed the blind men he resumed his journey. But it was only a short while and a little distance before another halt was called to the Master. This time it was not blind men, but Zaccheus, a chief among the tax collectors, and a rich man. This man was short and otherwise small in stature, and was very anxious to see Jesus. But because of his inconvenient size he knew that he could not, in the throng, behold Jesus. Therefore he decided, Jesus being yet about the city, to go forward and climb up into a sycamore-tree by the passing way and get a look at Jesus. Zaccheus did this, doubtless, for many reasons. First, he was anxious to look upon the face and form of whom he had heard so much as of Jesus; second, because a publican, and knowing the repute in which he was held, he hesitated to approach Jesus; and third, because this was his only known way to see Jesus. There are also lessons coming from Zaccheus. First, a desire to see Jesus and know of him always has its fruits of blessedness; second, by placing ourselves in Jesus's way the blessings which attend his train will fall on us; third, let no opportunity pass to see Jesus.

When Jesus reached the tree he did not pass without looking up, and looking up he could not fail to see Zaccheus. He spoke to him, calling his name, "Zaccheus, make haste, and come down; for to-day I must abide at thy house."

There was doubtless more in the heart of Zaccheus toward Jesus than mere curiosity. He, like Nicodemus, wished a knowledge of Jesus leading to discipleship. Jesus recognized this, and decided to take up some time with him.

Zaccheus, seeing that Jesus was not going to rebuke him for his sins but receive him as a friend, hastened down, and embraced Jesus joyfully. When the people, who could

not read hearts and understand character, saw the association of Jesus and the tax collector, they began to say, "He is gone to be guest with a man that is a sinner." Zaccheus perhaps heard this much of himself while with his distinguished guest; so, feeling bad, he began to apologize, saying, "Lord, the half of my goods I give to the poor; and if I have taken anything from any man by false accusation, I restore him fourfold." This man's confession and proposal were accepted by the Lord Jesus, who saw much further than the man's words. So Jesus said, "This day is salvation come to this house; for the Son of man is come to seek and save that which was lost." Hence, Jesus entered the house of Zaccheus and sojourned.

#### SECTION B.—JESUS AND THE POUNDS.

Luke xix, 11-28.

When Jesus was near the city of Jerusalem he spoke this parable to correct an erroneous idea that had existence, that the kingdom of God should soon appear. Even his disciples were expecting an early coming of this kingdom, and that it would be earthly and inaugurated at Jerusalem. Jesus began the parable thus: "A certain nobleman went into a far country to receive for himself a kingdom, and to return." This nobleman represents Jesus himself about to go away and receive from his Father his spiritual kingdom. "This nobleman called his ten servants, and delivered them ten pounds, and said unto them, Occupy till I come." It must be noticed that each servant had a pound, with orders to put it out for increase. It should be observed that the nobleman required each one to do his part, all being started out evenly. But the citizens hated the nobleman, and sent a message after him, saying, We will not have this man to reign over us. Jesus would teach his friends, and also enemies, that he was not here to build



an earthly government; hence how pointed these words to the friends and foes! He was only telling beforehand what his enemies would say concerning his going and returning, that he should not reign over them. It is to be observed that though the nobleman was spoken against, yet he received his kingdom. How well, in this particular, he represents Jesus, who was rejected from reigning over his enemies; yet became the very head of the corner! When the nobleman returned he called his ten servants, to know what each man had gained. How true it is that Jesus will call on each servant for his gains in the spiritual warfare! And how great will be the joy of the man who can say, "I have finished the work thou gavest me to do!"

This nobleman's first servant said, "Thy pound has gained ten pounds," or has multiplied tenfold. The nobleman said, "Well, thou good servant; because thou hast been faithful in a very little, have thou authority over ten cities." It is to be observed that this man is rewarded as his work was, and promoted by being given a city for every pound gained. Who can read without a joyous reflection upon such reward? The second came, saying, "Lord, thy pound hath gained five pounds;" and the same corresponding reward was granted him as the first. Let it be ever remembered that God will always bless our labors and multiply our talents.

Another one came (whether the third in order we can not tell), and said, "Lord, behold; here is thy pound, which I have kept laid up in a napkin: for I feared thee, because thou art an austere man: thou takest up that thou layest not down, and reapest that thou didst not sow." The nobleman replied, saying to this servant, "Out of thine own mouth will I judge thee, thou wicked servant." This servant made his own case a bad one by—first, not using his pound; and second, by speaking of the character of his Lord. It is easy to see that if one is to account to a hard

and grumbling character it is always wise to give to him no grounds of complaint, and keep out of his hands of censure. Since this servant knew the kind of man his Lord was, for that very reason he should have placed the pound where it could have been utilized for more, and not buried.

It may be well said here that God gives all a work to do, and we are to account for our work at his bar. We can not afford to be idle and stand from any duty. And if we do not do every duty well, we may expect censure from above and a loss of what we seem to have. For the buried pound was given to the man with ten; "for to him that hath shall be given, and from him that hath not shall be taken even that which he hath." What a lesson and thought are right here for us! The thought that I must be active for Jesus, doing my whole duty; and if I am not, I am liable to lose, at any time, that which I have. This last verse is a great thrust at the enemies of Christ, the Jewish Pharisees, who said ever, "We will not be ruled over by the Christ." But just what befell the nobleman's enemies will likewise befall the enemies of Christ—they will be ground to powder.

FRIDAY, MARCH 31ST.

#### SECTION 7.—JESUS REACHES BETHANY.

John xii, 1.

Jesus had been to Bethany, near Jerusalem, many times before this; indeed, all of his visits to Jerusalem likewise took in this small town, where Jesus seems to have spent his nights with Mary, Martha, and Lazarus, after spending the day in the temple services. But, after all considered, Jesus never reached Bethany just as he does now. He comes now, John says, six days only before the feast. This brought him here on Friday, March 31st. This was not a visit like former ones, in which Jesus knew he would go away

again into Galilee, Samaria, and Perea; but this visit was to linger near the place till death. This visit marked the beginning of his end, and the week when he would be delivered into the hands of his enemies.

Jesus arrived at Bethany some time in the afternoon of our Friday, and earlier than six o'clock, when the Jewish Sabbath began. Jesus on this visit was accompanied by all of his disciples, who were still hoping for and dreaming of an earthly kingdom to be started by their Master.

SATURDAY, APRIL 1ST.

### MARY ANOINTS HER LORD.

Matt. xxvi, 6-13; Mark xiv, 3-9; John xii, 2-11.

Jesus spent the Friday night at Bethany with the Lazarus family. The next day-dawn brought the Sabbath-day, which was our Saturday, April 1st. On this day Jesus doubtless remained quiet at the home of Mary and Martha; for there is no account of him going anywhere or doing but one thing, and that was to take supper at the house of Simon. It was perfectly natural that Jesus should remain quiet in Bethany on this Sabbath and rest; for this was the last Sabbath he would ever spend in the flesh. Hence it was to him a day of rest and deep meditation; a day which he used to teach Mary, sitting at his feet, and all others who wished saving knowledge. Mary, Martha, and other friends, were not as sad as was Jesus on that day; for they knew not that it was the last Sabbath of their Lord, and that he would so soon be brutally removed by the shameful death. They were enjoying the day most highly, to think that their Lord was with them spending it. What can be done to entertain Jesus, and show him appreciation? was the absorbing question. Well, Simon, who had been a leper and whom Jesus had doubtless healed, decided to prepare a feast at his house for Jesus.

To this meal Jesus carried all of his disciples, to even grumbling Judas. However, it must not be taken for granted that Simon gave the entire supply for the supper; for, while it looks so from Matthew, it does not from John, who seems to say Mary, Martha, Lazarus, and Simon, too, were in its getting up. In the arrangements, Martha, being more experienced, was chosen to serve. When Jesus and his disciples were seated at the table, Lazarus was honored with a seat with this august party. Lazarus, just about a month and a half prior, had been raised from the grave of four days' death. Mary, Martha, and Lazarus had never forgotten this great resurrection act, and thought on it with deepest gratitude. So Mary felt disposed to honor her Lord by a special act of appreciation. She took a pound of ointment of spikenard, which was very costly, and with it anointed the feet of Jesus, and wiped his feet with her hair. Mark speaks of this woman who anointed the feet of Jesus in such a way as to cause difference of opinion as to whether it was Mary the sister of Martha or some other Mary. This difference arises from Mark saying she broke the box, and poured it on the head of Jesus; while John says she anointed his feet and wiped them with her hair. There however is no ground for supposing these acts were not by the same person. John is more impressed by the anointing of his feet and wiping them by the hair of her head, than by the anointing of the head which was observed by Mark. They both agree that it was at Bethany, that it was in the house of Simon, the leper, and that his disciples grumbled at the so-called waste. These are the essential facts.

The very precious ointment was highly perfumed, and its aroma filled the entire house. This odor drew the attention of the disciples, and especially that of Judas, the treasurer, who always watched the going out of every dime, and craved a steady income. He knew Jesus was among

friends, and felt that if Jesus would only make a wish for anything, it would come, even to the amount of the ointment that had been spent for that spikenard. Judas asked why was not the ointment sold for three hundred pence (some forty dollars of our money), and given to the poor? But John tells us he was not anxious about the poor, but himself. He would hope the money turned over to him, that he might appropriate it. But Jesus came to her rescue (as he always comes to those who do right), and said to Judas: "Let her alone: against the day of my burial hath she done this. For the poor always ye have with you; but me ye have not always." Jesus here approves a righteous act, and accepts the best and all the woman could do. He requires us to-day to do our best and whole duty toward him. We need not let go our duty to him for the poor, who are ever about us.

Many people came to Bethany that Sabbath to see the wonderful prophet, Jesus, and Lazarus, who had been raised after four days' death. Because Lazarus was such a living testimony to the miraculous power of Jesus, and was causing so many Jews to believe on him, the chief priests decided to kill both Jesus and Lazarus. And they sought the life of the Prince of peace till they took it.

SUNDAY, APRIL 2D.

#### SECTION 8.—JESUS AT JERUSALEM.

Matt. xxi, 1-11; Mark xi, 1-11; Luke xix, 29-44; John xii, 12-19.

We saw that on the Jewish Sabbath, our Saturday, Jesus spent the time in quiet at Bethany with his disciples and friends. But on the next day, our Sunday, and April the second, he went into the city, Jerusalem.

All the writers speak of this particular visit, though not so important as other visits; but doubtless because they were all looking for Jesus now to enter some visible

reign of earthly royalty. Since Luke's is the fullest account of this visit, we will be governed by him.

When Jesus was on his way from Bethany and near Bethphage, on the Mount of Olives, he sent two of his disciples, saying, "Go ye into the village over against you; in the which, at your entering, ye shall find a colt tied, whereon yet never man sat; loose him, and bring him hither. And if any man ask you, Why do ye loose him? thus shall ye say unto him, Because the Lord hath need of him." One in reading this narrative must conclude that Jesus used prescience here, or had some friendly understanding with some one, prior to this, concerning the colt. But since the disciples knew nothing of the arrangement it is hardly to be believed that there was any; so this is evidently an act of Divine prescience; and if so, it is a strong plea for the Divinity of Jesus. For the disciples went, and found it just as Jesus told them. When the disciples began to loose the colt the owners asked, "Why loose ye the colt?" They replied, "The Lord hath need of him." Then the owners gave consent, and the colt was carried to Jesus. Matthew speaks of the colt, and also its mother, and in such a way as it would seem that Jesus rode the mother of the colt as well as the colt. But since Mark, Luke, and John only speak of the colt being used, it is presumably true that there is some mistake in Matthew's translation, and that "them" is used where "him" ought to be used. Mark, Luke, and John would not have failed to note and mentioned the fact if Jesus had ridden both during the trip into the city. It also would have been very unlikely to see Jesus on first one and the other of those beasts, and ridiculous to see him riding both at the same time. At any rate, the colt was brought, and Jesus was seated upon the colt, covered with his disciples' garments. And as Jesus rode on they spread their clothes in the way, and when he reached the descent of the moun-



tain the whole crowd of his disciples began to rejoice and praise God for all the mighty works they had seen through Jesus. They also said, "Blessed be the King that cometh in the name of the Lord: peace in heaven, and glory in the highest!" This adoration was indeed too much for the Pharisees who had plotted to put Jesus to death, and who were filled with jealous envy. So they stepped forth, and, in hypocritical speech, said, "Master, rebuke thy disciples." To them Jesus replied, "I tell you that, if these should hold their peace, the stones would immediately cry out." This language of Jesus indicates that he is Divine, and should be worshiped; that men, failing to do this, will be supplanted by the stones, which will sing his praises.

Jesus finally came near to the beautiful city, and as he thought of its future destruction by its enemies, and its blindness to lay hands upon its only salvation to put him to death, and of how God would abandon it thenceforth, he wept over it from the mountain, saying: "If thou hadst known, even thou, at least in this thy day, the things that belong unto thy peace; but now they are hid from thine eyes. For the days shall come upon thee that thine enemies shall cast a trench about thee, and compass thee round, and keep thee in on every side; and shall lay thee even with the ground, and thy children within thee; and they shall not leave in thee one stone upon another; because thou knewest not the time of thy visitation."

Is it not wonderful that Jesus would weep over a doomed city like this, and especially when it had had every inducement laid down to make it safe and prosperous, such as was in the case of Jerusalem? Jesus saw and spoke of its downfall, and knew it was because of sin in rejecting the light in himself. The Spirit often weeps on account of our follies, but especially when we willfully and knowingly commit sin against heaven.

MONDAY, APRIL 3D.

## SECTION 9.—JESUS CURSES THE TREE.

Matt. xxi, 18, 19; Mark xi, 12-14.

We last parted with Jesus in the city Jerusalem. It was the Christian Sabbath; but to-day, Monday, April the third, he is on his return to Jerusalem from Bethany, where he spent his nights. On his road crossing the Mount of Olives he sees a fig-tree with leaves. Mark says Jesus was hungry at this time. If so, Jesus must have left Bethany very early, and before breakfast; for he would hardly get hungry so early after breakfast. When he looked up he saw a fig-tree at a distance, and made to it, if haply he might find fruit on it; but found nothing but leaves; for it was too early in the year for ripe figs. Then Jesus spoke to the tree, "No man eat fruit of thee hereafter forever."

There are lessons here for us. First, it must be observed that Jesus had this act in mind before leaving Bethany that morning, early or late; second, Jesus knew beforehand that there were no figs on that tree, but he could not teach his lesson without going to it. This tree was a representation of the house of Israel, which, though blessed above all other races religiously, had proven only a barren fruit-tree, which, indeed, had leaves, but no fruit. To them Jesus had come and sought fruit; but of them he found nothing but leaves. So he stood now upon the mount in sight of their temple, ready to forsake, curse, and cause them to pine away. Just what he said to them, "No man eat fruit of you hereafter forever," is being fulfilled more and more each and every day, for not since has any religious creed or system looked to the Jews for guidance in spirituals. What was once their privilege—to enlighten and lead the world—is no more theirs. No one looks up to that race longer as having any special doctrine. How great we can make our mistakes, and destroy our

privileges in this life! Hence how careful we should be to leave no stone unturned in trying to do good, and that we never sin away our opportunities to honor God and bless mankind!

#### SECTION A.—JESUS CLEANSSES THE TEMPLE.

Matt. xxi, 12-17; Mark xi, 15-19; Luke xix, 45-48, and xxi, 37, 38.

Jesus is still in Jerusalem, and it is yet Monday, April the third. In the outset, Jesus cleansed the temple by driving out all improper ways to support it. So now, as he is about to wind up his earthly career, he makes one more effort to stamp his disapproval upon any unrighteous acts to bring revenues to his house. Those money-changers and buyers and sellers had on a garb of righteousness, but inwardly were thieves and robbers. So Jesus went into the temple, and, though they were acting stewards looking after the temporalities of the temple, drove out the buyers and sellers, and overthrew the tables of the money-changers. Then, to sanctify the thoughts of the house and to justify his actions, he quoted their Scripture, "My house shall be called a house of prayer." Then he accused them of theft, "But ye have made it a den of thieves."

It should never be forgotten that in the beginning of the Christian Church, Jesus cast his disapproval upon all steps and actions to support the Church if they are not truly hallowed. He repeated this disapproval, as seen at his end. Then we gather that the Church should always be kept free from whatever is not truly sacred, it matters not how important in service, or how much value in finance. We can not be too careful in guarding against Church fairs, raffles, and chance-games; for all ill-gotten gain goes without the approval of heaven.

While in the temple the blind and lame came to Jesus to be healed; and those busy hands and tender heart of his went out to heal and save them, and they were restored.

There was great joy and rejoicing when the blinded eyes were opened so that the blind could see Jesus and the faces of friends and loved ones; when the lame could throw aside their sticks, straighten their bodies, and again walk the familiar streets of the city with their friends.

But the priests, who were both jealous of the influence of Jesus and afraid of his powers, were displeased at all Jesus said and did. They were especially grieved to hear the people crying "Hosanna" to the Son of David. They asked Jesus did he hear, receive, and recognize what the people were saying about him—that they worshiped him. Jesus replied, "Yea; have ye never read, Out of the mouth of babes and sucklings thou hast perfected praise?" Jesus was always ready to quote some passage of Scripture to justify his works and confound his enemies. They were never able to entrap him. He received justly the worship of men, because he was Divine; and when men sang his praises he could show that it had come as a fulfillment of prophecy.

When this conversation was finished and the day was fast ending, Jesus left the city and returned to the Mount of Olives for Bethany.

TUESDAY, APRIL 4TH.

SECTION B.—JESUS ON OLIVET AND IN JERUSALEM.

Matt. xxi, 20-27; Mark xi, 20-33; Luke xx, 1-8.

Jesus is yet in Jerusalem; though since we left him cleansing the temple and healing the blind and lame he has been out to Bethany and spent a night. And it is now Tuesday, April the fourth. We first have him to-day upon the Mount of Olives, over which he is crossing to reach the city and temple. But yesterday he cursed the fig-tree, and on his way back to-day with his disciples he reaches that tree, and Peter calls his attention to it, "Master, behold! the fig-tree which thou cursedst is with-

ered away." Jesus replied, "Verily, I say unto you, If ye have faith, and doubt not, ye shall not only do this which is done to the fig-tree, but also if ye shall say unto this mountain, Be thou removed, and be thou cast into the sea, it shall be done; and all things, whatsoever ye shall ask in prayer, believing, ye shall receive."

Thus Jesus encourages faith, and points out its powerful possibilities. Certainly, the language is figurative. We are not to understand that Jesus would, for the sake of our faith, remove natural mountains or trees; for that would be a breach of natural laws, which are of God, and must be as true as spiritual. But we are to understand that all difficulties, though they be as big as mountains, can be overcome by faith and prayer. They can not stand the resistance of faith in God, which does not only conquer objects in the world, but overcomes the world itself. We have seen the significance of this tree; hence we go on to the temple.

#### THE AUTHORITY OF JESUS QUESTIONED.

When Jesus passed on from the withered tree and mountain into the temple he began to teach the people, and sway them by his words and doctrine. These were attracting so much attention that the chief priests and elders could stand it no longer. They could find no crime in Jesus, and saw no way to reach him. So, burning with rage, and jealous to the extent that they were miserable, they made up a deputation to go and question his authority for his works and doctrine. So the deputies reached Jesus in the temple thus, "By what authority doest thou these things; and who gave thee this authority?"

Well might they have asked such questions, for this was all they could do. They saw his works of miracle, which they could not speak against. They recognized in his doctrine truth superior to all they had ever heard.

They saw the effects of his miracles and doctrine among the people, and that the people were following Jesus. They knew they had not sent him out, nor authorized him to go; but rather, in spite of their authority, Jesus was carrying the world. They writhed and worried; they fretted and grumbled. They asked his authority, to be only more fretted by his unanswerable questions. For Jesus replied, "I also will ask you one thing, which if ye tell me, I likewise will tell you by what authority I do these things." Now comes his question, "The baptism of John, whence was it? from heaven or of man?" Then they began to reason. They said, "If we shall say, From heaven; he will say unto us, Why did ye not then believe him?" This was good reasoning; for John had no special one of earth to start him out. He only began preaching righteousness, repentance, and that the kingdom of heaven was at hand. If they would acknowledge John's baptism as heavenly, they would be also called upon so to recognize Jesus. Jesus knew, however, that they would thus reason and answer; and, that he might shun giving his authority, he chose this method to silence them, and did it. He had told the world, time and again, that his authority was of God; and had proven this by his miraculous credentials, and felt that there was no need further to express his authority except to those who wished to believe to the saving of their souls.

#### SECTION C.—THE PARABLE OF THE TWO SONS.

Matt. xxi, 28-32.

It should not be forgotten that it is Tuesday, and that Jesus did more work on this day in the city, by way of teaching, than on any other day of the passion-week. After his authority had been questioned, and he answered his adversaries with such sagacity concerning the baptism of John, he proceeded to speak parables, the first being that of "The Two Sons." He said, "A certain man had two



sons; and he came to the first, and said, Son, go work to-day in my vineyard." This son refused to go; but, after reflection and repentance, he went. This son represents the wicked of the present day, and the publicans and harlots of Christ's earthly days. This son positively refused to go; but, when he thought of his error, he repented, went and did as his father ordered. Hence his repentance and obedience justified him. It matters not how great are the sins of sinners; if they, under the gospel, will repent and believe the gospel, they will be pardoned and accepted in the Divine sight. Obedience, late or early wrought, will find a place in Divine grace for salvation; for it is obedience and faith which God asks, and not promises.

Regarding the second son, he said, when asked to go, "I go, sir;" but went not. This is the promising son, and all he did was to promise; for he went not, and for his disobedience was not penitent. This was a hypocritical son, who represents the Pharisaic Jews. They had the first religious opportunities to work and obey God. They had the first opportunities to hear of and receive the kingdom of the Christ. To them John preached righteousness and repentance. He urged them to prepare for the new kingdom coming. They heard his voice, and doubtless made many pretenses to reformation, but to no end that was worthy. They only heard, promised, and did not what they were taught; hence the profligate sinners who repented and turned to God went into heaven before them.

It is not the man who hears and resolves that is saved, but the man who does the will of God by putting his faith, promises, and resolutions into actual practice. It is not the mildest and least sinful man who gets to heaven, but the one who comes with all his heart, confessing his sins, and believes on the Lord Jesus Christ for salvation. God does not save men because they promise obedience, nor does he condemn them because they do not promise it.

He saves because they, repenting, turn and come to him for mercy and grace. Hence all characters have a fair showing at the throne if they only believe in the gospel.

#### SECTION D.—PARABLE OF THE HUSBANDMEN.

Matt. xxi, 33-46; Mark xii, 1-12; Luke xx, 9-19.

This is one of the easiest-applied and plainest parables Jesus ever spoke. He spoke it against the Jewish rulers, and they did not fail to see its application, though they could not understand it fully at that time. Jesus said there was a certain householder which planted a vineyard, and hedged it round about, and digged a winepress in it, and built a tower, and let it out to husbandmen, and went into a far country—Luke says—for a long time. This is a very natural occurrence that is going on even now every day among those who have lands to let for various purposes. This case, however, is one of vintage; for the garden was let for vine-fruits. Appliedly speaking, this householder represents God, our Heavenly Father. The vineyard represents Jerusalem, the place in which was cultivated all Divine knowledge prior to the coming of Christ. The hedge about the vineyard would represent the protection and aid of God. The winepress would stand for all Jewish rites and modes of worship. The tower stands for the Jewish temple. When the season came, the householder sent his servants to the husbandmen, that they might receive the fruits of it. Of course, these fruits were to be received for the householder, who owned the vineyard.

One must not fail to see that the husbandmen in the text were the ruling priests. The priests were trusted with the vineyard of God and all its fruits. They were required to account for its use and their time of its service to God. But the question is: "Did they prove faithful to their trust? Did they rightly use their hallowed privileges?" They did

not; and it is for that very reason that Jesus spoke this parable against them and to accuse them. The servants that were sent to get the rent represent the true prophets and teachers of God, who came to deliver God's messages, that those priests and rulers might properly guard the people, so as to bring fruits of repentance and righteousness. God expects and demands that his servant shepherds shall so cultivate the hearts and train the manners of his people that he can receive and enjoy their fruits.

#### CONDUCT OF THE HUSBANDMEN.

The husbandmen took their lord's servants, and beat one, and killed another, and stoned another. This is an accusation of the Jewish rulers. Truly they did beat, kill, and stone the prophets from the beginning, and that for no other cause than that the prophets told them of their sins and the threatening calamities of God's judgments. Nevertheless, God continued to send these messengers to them from time to time, and, again and again, they all were similarly treated. Last of all his prophets, God sent his Son as the husbandman, who said, "They will reverence my son." It does seem that when the Jewish rulers had slain prophet after prophet they would have stopped slaying when the Son of God came, telling them who he was and what was his mission. But they did not cease their murder, and did not gather reverence of heart for Jesus, but despised him because he was righteous.

When the husbandmen saw the son, they said, instead of reverence, among themselves, "This is the heir; come, let us kill him, and let us seize on his inheritance;" and they caught him and cast him out of the vineyard, and slew him. How truly does this son represent the Son of God, and these wicked husbandmen the murderous priests of Jesus's day! They caught the Christ, the Son and final Prophet, and slew him, instead of reverencing him, who

was the God in the flesh. How truly did they cast Jesus out of the Jewish vineyard, Jerusalem, and slew him that they might receive the merited inheritance of his Father! But Jesus asked a pertinent and important question, "What will the householder do unto those husbandmen?" Then he seems to make them answer to their own damnation, "He will miserably destroy those wicked men, and will let out his vineyard unto other husbandmen, which shall render him the fruits in their seasons." This was Jesus telling the priests how God would deal with them here and hereafter for being unfaithful to their trust.

This is a Christian lesson to all shepherds and pastors; for all who fail to be faithful shall perish most miserably, and their work turned over to others who will be faithful.

#### THE REJECTED STONE.

Jesus then asked another question, "Did ye never read in the Scriptures, The stone which the builders rejected, the same is become the head of the corner?" Jesus simply declares here that, though slain and not revered by his enemies the priests, yet he would become the very head and chief Corner-stone of all saving godliness. And since they forfeited all their rights by rejecting and slaying him, the kingdom of grace would be given to others—meaning the Gentiles.

Then he called their attention to the hazardous undertaking of resisting this stone; that "whosoever falls on it shall be broken; and on whomsoever it falls, it will grind him to powder." Any dealing with Christ aside from his righteous approval is foolhardy and self-destructive.

The priests could not fail to see that Jesus was talking about them in this parable. And it is no wonder that they sought his death, but had to go about it in a fearful way, since the people held Jesus as a Prophet, and he had not delivered himself as a Lamb for the slaughter.

## SECTION E.—MARRIAGE OF THE KING'S SON.

Matt. xxii, 1-14.

Let the reader keep in mind that all the occurrences (including the withered fig-tree, mentioned by Matthew xxi, 20-22) took place on Tuesday, April the fourth. This was the most busy day of the passion week. Jesus on that day speaks the above parable of a king's son's marriage. This parable, as the one preceding, was spoken against the Jewish rulers, and to point out their misconduct regarding Jesus himself.

Jesus begins by saying, "The kingdom of heaven is like unto a certain king, which made a marriage for his son; and sent forth his servants to call them that were bidden to the wedding: and they would not come." Thus far we have three personages—the king, the son, and the servants. This king represents, in the parable, God the Father; the son represents Jesus; and the servants represent the earliest preachers of the kingdom, from John the Baptist and his immediate followers. The God of heaven made a marriage of his Son when he caused him to espouse human nature and become identical with it; also when he authorized his Son to receive believers as his bride, and husband them. The wedding represents all the instituted means of grace provided in the Church. The invited guests were the unbelieving Jews who were preached to by John and the seventy missionaries, and latterly by all of the apostles. The invited would not accept the invitation of the king; neither would the Jews accept the offers of the gospel feast.

The parable continues, "Again, he sent forth other servants, saying, Tell them which are bidden, Behold, I have prepared my dinner; my oxen and my fatlings are killed, and all things are ready; come unto the marriage." The other servants doubtless represent Peter and his fellow-apostles, who kept up the invitation after Pentecost. From

that time they continued more urgently to invite men, saying, in the voice of God, "Behold, the dinner is prepared; the oxen and fatlings are killed, and all things are ready." This same good message is ringing to-day, and the provisions of a great Christian feast are lying spread for all who will partake of them. How every one should feel honored, and rejoice at being invited to the great royal marriage-feast of the Son of God!

But the parable continues, "They made light of it [the invitation], and went their ways: one to his farm, another to his merchandise: and the remnant took his servants, and entreated them spitefully, and slew them."

We know the Jews did stubbornly reject the apostolic doctrine of Christ, and made light of all they said; some following one thing, and others other things, for livelihood. Others among the Jews were not content with simple unbelief, but filled the cup of their iniquity by putting the apostles to death, and all others whom they could well reach. But how truly are men to-day not only refusing the means of grace, but are making fun of same, and are slaying true and righteous servants of God!

But when the king heard thereof, he was wroth: and he sent forth his armies and destroyed those murderers, and burned up their city. Jesus is simply telling the Jews that, on account of the way they had, were treating, and would treat him and his followers, God would bring upon them the Roman armies, who would destroy thousands of them and burn their Jerusalem. And truly all he told them was fulfilled up to the time of Titus, who so woefully wasted the Jews and tore up and plowed up their very streets. How many people perished on account of unbelief in Christ! How many are perishing daily on account of unbelief, not only in God, but in the affairs of men! Unbelief, how dangerous thou art!

When the king of the parable had destroyed the mur-



derers of his servants, he said to still other servants: "The wedding is ready, but they which were bidden were not worthy. Go ye, therefore, unto the highways, and as many as ye shall find, bid to the marriage." So those servants obeyed, calling in good and bad, till the wedding was filled with guests. This language is perfectly plain, showing that the Jews had first invitations to the gospel; but since they made themselves unworthy by unbelief and rejecting the Son of God, the apostles were sent out into all the world to call in all the Gentiles, good or bad characters, so the Lord's feast might be full.

#### THE WEDDING GARMENT.

When the king's guests were all in he came to inspect them; and among those present was one who did not have on his wedding garment. Now, this was a long, white, floating, gownlike dress, worn on all wedding occasions and other festivities. And any one without it was considered very unworthy, and deserving punishment. Hence, the king's inviting those who were of the lowly as well as upper class to the marriage of his son, was worthy of special preparation; and when none were made it was highly insulting. But this was the more so when it was customary for parties inviting to furnish their guests with wedding garments if they did not bring them; and the king doubtless had enough garments for all, leaving that man only to ask for it. He was highly culpable to be in the crowd without a proper dress, and more so when he even refused to ask for freely-prepared dress. He was first kindly questioned by the king, "Friend, how camest thou in hither not having a wedding garment?" The man felt his guilt, and deserved punishment—he was silent. Then came his condemnation; for the king said: "Bind him hand and foot and take him away, and cast him into utter darkness: there shall be weeping and gnashing of teeth. For many are called, but few are

chosen." This parable may be said to begin and end with the Church. It starts with John the Baptist and ends with time; for it embraces the universal call for all time; the rejection of the call for all time, and the final action of God, the great King, in dealing with all rejectors and unworthy believers. For what the king did to the unclothed man who had not on the wedding garment, God will do to all who are unclothed with garments of grace and righteousness when he comes to judgment. He will cast out all such into outer darkness, where there will be weeping and wailing and gnashing of teeth.

#### SECTION F.—THE TRIBUTE MONEY.

Matt. xxii, 15-22; Mark xii, 13-17; Luke xx, 20-26.

Let it not be forgot that we are still in Jerusalem, and it is Tuesday of passion-week, a very busy day for Jesus, as we have observed. On this day the Pharisees were busy trying to entrap Jesus. At this juncture they formed an alliance with a political ring to ensnare Jesus by drawing him out to take issue against the powers that were. In order to succeed, they feigned themselves righteous, and that they recognized very highly the dignity of Jesus.

The Herodians were noted political tricksters, and in everything to perpetuate the Herodian house, at any cost. They would join hands against Jesus, or anybody else, if they could by doing so perpetuate the Herodian authority. With flattery and deceitful hypocrisy the Pharisees and Herodians came to Jesus thus, "Master, we know that thou art true, and teachest the way of God in truth; neither carest thou for any man: for thou regardest not the person of men."

This language betrays the vilest hypocrisy in the Pharisees and Herodians. First, the Pharisees showed their deceit by staying away and sending disciples; for they knew

Jesus would catch on to their hypocrisy at once. Secondly, they addressed Jesus as "Master," or "Rabbi," which was only lip-work; for they were declaring him everything but a gentleman among the people. They called him true and a truly godly teacher; but they meant not a word uttered. They pretended great regard for his personal dignity when they said, "Thou regardest not the person of men." All this bosh and human gusto were to get Jesus elated and induced to talk their way. What did they want him to say? They questioned him to get it: "What thinkest thou? Is it lawful to give tribute [or tax] unto Cæsar, or not?" From the above gusto, they thought and hoped that Jesus would say "No." This would have been the reply of any common Jew; for at this time they were subjugated and forced to pay tax to the Roman Cæsars; yet they hated to do so, and felt it was unjust. No Jew would have been punished for saying "no" except Jesus; but since they wanted Jesus put to death they felt that their nearest way was to get him to speak against Roman authority. But Jesus was God, and not man; and, although his enemies came in disguise, he was not deceived by them; for he could read their hearts. He gave them to understand that he knew they were trying him. He asked, "Why tempt ye me, ye hypocrites?" What an exposure and thrust he makes of and at them! He tells that they were trying him, and pronounces them hypocrites for so doing. He then said, "Show me the tribute money;" and it was done; and he asked whose were the image and superscription; and they replied, "They are Cæsar's." This was enough for Jesus. He recognized human law ordained by Divine, and came not to regulate the laws of men in civil affairs any further than moral right or wrong extend, and then only in an indirect manner.

When he ascertained the image and superscription to be Cæsar's, he said, Why, yes; give Cæsar what is his. This is only a law of right, to render every man his just deserts.

Jesus came into the world with that very law, "Do unto others as ye would they should do unto you."

He further followed up his remarks by saying, as unto Cæsar so unto God, "Give what is his to him." That is, no man must withhold from God what is necessary to carry on his works, because he has his taxes to pay to the government, his family to care for, and other debts to cancel. God claims a portion of every man's earnings, however small or great, and no man, for any cause, is excused.

#### SECTION G.—QUESTION OF THE RESURRECTION.

Matt. xxii, 23-33; Mark xii, 18-27; Luke xx, 27-40.

On the self-same Tuesday that Jesus so completely betrayed the hypocrisy of the Pharisaic spies concerning tribute to Cæsar came the Sadducees, who denied the resurrection, angels, and spirits. They came with hypocrisy, feigning reverence for Jesus, as the Herodians did. But they were not reverent, nor seekers after knowledge which they thought Jesus could supply; they were trying to test his ability to answer what they thought was a hard question, and to entangle him in his favorite doctrine of the resurrection. Since they did not, as a sect, believe in the resurrection, they would very naturally oppose Jesus in teaching and building such a doctrine; besides, they were anxious to get rid of him and his influence. So they came with their question while he was still in the temple. Whether their question was one of experience or one of their own fabrication to puzzle Jesus is not known. But by their using the number, seven, as being so many brothers who had had the woman, and it being an indefinite, sacred number among the Jews, it is hardly probable that it was an experimental reality of life. Anyway, it answered their purpose and engaged the attention of Jesus.

They began by using Moses for authority, as though Jesus was inferior to Moses, or it would call forth more

of his recognition. Moses wrote (Deut. xv, 5), "If any man's brother die, having a wife, and he die without children, that his brother should take his wife, and raise up seed unto his brother." After referring to the above law, they propounded the great question, "There were seven brothers, who successively married one woman because of this law, and all successively died leaving no children: therefore, whose wife shall she be in the resurrection?" This was, from a human standpoint, a legal and puzzling question. And, answered humanly, it requires some meditation and forethought. But Jesus had no trouble to answer at all, since he was on the Divine and spiritual side of the resurrection. He replied as astutely as ever, "The children of this world marry, and are given in marriage: but they which shall be accounted worthy to obtain that world, and the resurrection from the dead, neither marry nor are given in marriage: neither can they die any more: for they are equal unto the angels; and are the children of God, being children of the resurrection."

Jesus plainly shows that the habits and customs of the world to come, regarding sexual relations, will all be laid aside; that death will no more intervene; that the souls of men become in character equal to angels, and that the souls of believers will sustain the nearest relation to God, that of being children.

Then Jesus called their attention to their ignorance of their own Scriptures, and showed them their ignorant errors. He showed them that Moses, whom they recognized as their lawgiver and guide, pointed out and owned the resurrection by calling God the God of Abraham, of Isaac, and of Jacob; while the first had been dead, bodily, many hundred years. But God was the God of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, because they were then living; and if living, there was such a thing as a resurrection, angels, and spirits. This was the only logical conclusion; and the



Sadducees had to swallow their own bitter medicine, and own to the inevitable doctrine of a resurrection, if they would claim to be disciples of Moses. Indeed, the answer of Jesus was so incontrovertible that even his enemies, the scribes, who were resurrectionists, applauded his answer, "Master, thou hast well said." This and the tribute-money reply were quite enough for the enemies of Jesus during one day; so they held up, and asked no more questions at all.

#### SECTION H.—THE GREAT COMMANDMENT.

*Matt. xxii, 34-40; Mark xii, 28-34.*

We have seen in the previous section how Jesus answered and confused the Sadducees. When this was done, so completely as to silence them, the Pharisees came back on the stage, and were represented by a scribe, who was also a lawyer, who asked a question to try Jesus's ability to answer. Jesus replied: "Hear, O Israel: the Lord our God is one Lord: and thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy mind, and with all thy strength: this is the first commandment. And the second is like; namely, this, Thou shalt love thy neighbor as thyself. There is none other commandment greater than these." The lawyer replied: "Well, Master, thou hast said the truth: for there is one God; and there is none but he: and to love him with all the heart, and with all the understanding, and with all the soul, and with all the strength, and to love his neighbor as himself, is more than all whole burnt-offerings and sacrifices." This lawyer answered well and truthfully when he said to love God supremely and one's neighbor as himself is more than offerings and sacrifices; for love is the fulfilling of the law, and God's summary of duty. Indeed, the answer was so evangelical that Jesus said to him, "Thou art not far from the kingdom of God."



This man came with the prejudicially blind Pharisees to entrap Jesus; but it is a fact, that to come in questions with Jesus is to find one's self not far from God and eternal life

#### SECTION I.—JESUS ASKS QUESTIONS.

Matt. xxii, 41-46; Mark xii, 35-37; Luke xx, 41-44.

This was, as we have seen, a very busy day with Jesus; but especially in teaching and vindicating his doctrines by answering and silencing his enemies. They questioned Jesus extremely and ignorantly; but when they got through, then came his time to ask them some questions, and this he did. He asked: "What think ye of Christ? Whose Son is he?" This question got them right where he wanted them. They answered, "He is the Son of David, according to the flesh." This is the answer any Jew would have given; for their Scriptures all pointed out that the Christ would come of the David family. Jesus consented with their reply thus far; but now puts the second and unanswerable part of his question to them thus, "Well, if Christ is the son of David, how does David call him [in Psalm cx, 1] Lord? And how was this done, when David was under the Divine afflatus? How could David call him Lord when Christ was his son?" The Pharisaic party and Sadducees pretended to know the Scriptures; but here was one instance of their profound ignorance of the Scriptures; for if they had understood the Scriptures and believed in the Christ, they could not have failed to see how David could, according to the flesh, say, "Son;" but according to the Spirit, "Lord;" for Christ was to David both Lord and Son. No man living or speaking after the flesh only can understand Jesus. There is always the spiritually discerned and the temporally perceived. "That which is of the flesh is flesh; and that which is of the Spirit is spirit."

## SECTION J.—JESUS ARRAIGNS HIS ENEMIES.

Matt. xxiii, 1-39; Mark xii, 38-40; Luke xx, 45-47.

Jesus was greatly annoyed on this day by the Pharisees, scribes, and Sadducees. He listened to them, answered them, and asked them questions. Their questions were only tests and to entrap Jesus; but he asked them questions in self and doctrinal defense, and to expose their ignorance of the Scriptures. But Jesus could not close up the labors of this day, and it being the last timely opportunity to teach publicly in the temple, without arraigning his enemies before men and showing their worthlessness as teachers of Divine things.

He turned to the deluded multitude and to his disciples, and spoke as follows: "The scribes and Pharisees sit in Moses' seat. All, therefore, they bid you observe, that observe and do." Jesus had declared long since that he came not to destroy the law and the prophets; so he proved faithful to the last. He recognized and observed the law and the prophets, and enjoined their observance. Yet he did not indorse the pretended leaders and teachers of the law aside from the law. He said, "Do not ye after their works: for they say and do not." Then Jesus shows how inconsistent they were with the law, in that they bound heavy and grievous burdens upon men's shoulders, and would not touch the same with their fingers. They simply worked to be seen of men, and made broad their phylacteries and borders of their garments, which was only pretentious holiness. At feasts they loved the highest rooms, and chief seats in the synagogues; the greetings in the markets, and to be called "Rabbi, Rabbi."

Then Jesus digresses as he leaves the traits of his enemies, and tells his disciples, "Be not ye called Rabbi;" for Christ was their Master, and they were simply brethren in Christ. He also added that they should call no man "father"

upon earth, for the fact, one in heaven is Father. And for the same reason they were not to call any man "master." Then Jesus taught that the great should be the servant; that the self-exalting should be abased, while the humble should be exalted.

One can not read these last injunctions without thinking of the folly of the present times in ministerial ranks; that so many of them are so Pharisaic that nothing suits them but to be called "doctor" this and that. And the greed is so strong that all kinds of steps are being taken to get to be called "doctor" or "Rabbi." While this is true of Protestantism, the Romish priest everywhere is demanding that all men recognize him as "father." Both of these practices seem to be condemned by Jesus, who offered as his highest title, "brethren."

Jesus certainly recognized the humble gospel minister to be the greatest of men; but placed him as servant of all. Jesus turned again to his enemies, and pronounced several woes upon them. First, because they shut up the kingdom of heaven against men, and remained out themselves; second, because they devoured the homes of helpless and lone widows, and, for show, made long prayers; but for these causes the greater damnation would be upon them. Third, because they compassed sea and land to make one proselyte; and, when made, they made him two-fold more the child of hell. Fourth, because they taught that it was nothing to swear by the temple, but that swearing by the gold of the temple made one debtor; because they taught that swearing by the altar was nothing, but by swearing by the gift upon it rendered one guilty.

Then Jesus taught that "whosoever sweareth by the altar sweareth by it and all on it." Likewise, "to swear by the temple, swears by him that dwelleth therein;" or "he that sweareth by heaven sweareth by the Throne and him upon it." Jesus pronounced a fifth woe upon his enemies,

because they tithed mint, anise, cumin, and neglected the weightier matters of the law, such as judgment, mercy, and faith. Then Jesus characterized them as blind guides, who strained at gnats but swallowed camels.

A sixth woe is pronounced upon them, because they, pretentiously, made clean the outside of the cup and platter, while internally they were full of excess and extortion. A seventh woe was pronounced, because they were like whited sepulchers, that appear outwardly beautiful, but are polluted inwardly with decaying corpses. He called up an eighth woe, because they built the tombs of the prophets, and garnished the sepulchers of the righteous, and declared they would not have done as their fathers to the prophets, while they were doing worse things to Jesus himself. Jesus exhorted them, through their stubborn rebellion to fill up the wicked measure of their fathers; and meantime showed that it was impossible to escape the damnation of hell as a serpentine race.

Jesus further pointed out that they would fill the measure of their fathers' wickedness by killing his prophets, wise men, and scribes. And in their acts of persecution and death they would bring upon their heads all the innocent blood, from righteous Abel unto Zacharias, whom they slew between the temple and the altar.

#### LAMENTATION OF JESUS.

When Jesus considered the inevitable fate of Jerusalem through her deceptive leadership, which took every step for the downfall of the city, the ruin of the race, and the removal from them the last vestige of hope, he could not but weep over and lament her. Touchingly he turns away his lovely yet pathetic face, and mutters, "O Jerusalem, Jerusalem; thou that killest the prophets, and stoned them which are sent unto thee; how often would I have gathered thy children together, even as a hen gathereth her

chickens under her wings, and ye would not!" After this lamentation, Jesus made a very sad declaration; namely, that their house, meaning the temple, was left desolate. That beautiful temple, which was the joy of the whole earth—which had for centuries been visited and dwelt in by the Divine presence as the holy Shekinah—was now abandoned as the holy place, and no more to be the seat of Divine government. That temple, which had ever been known as and called the house of God, then lost its significance, and was turned over to the Jews by the Son of God, who for the first time in all of his life disowned it as "My Father's house," and called it "your house."

Jesus then further declared that they should no more see him till they would say, "Blessed is he that cometh in the name of the Lord." But Jesus meant that they should no more see him in the temple as a Teacher, trying to draw and persuade with truth; that when they should see him again it will be in the crowning day, when they will be glad to accost him as the Blest of God.

What terrific death there is in sin and unbelief! How much through these is lost! They drive away God, close up heaven, and damn the soul who holds them.

#### SECTION K.—THE WIDOW'S MITE.

Mark xii, 41-44; Luke xxi, 1-4.

During this last day Jesus spent in the temple, which he had visited from youth and called his Father's house, he took his seat, Mark tells us, over against the treasury. Of course, this treasury was the provision for the temple's support, and a place prepared for receiving the offerings of the people. During this festal week and day the people made a specialty of giving. Now, among those who cast into the treasury was a poor widow. Her name is not given, an omission which never would, perhaps, have gone

by had she, like Lazarus, been especially honoring the Lord Jesus Christ. But she was only performing a required and known duty. She was now only laboring to that end which would honor men in religious office, but perpetuating only a typical institution whose force was now ended. I repeat, this woman performed this act of giving as a religious duty that was enjoined upon every Jew toward the temple service. She gave according to her ability, as well as the rich gave. No one, under the Jewish law, was exempt from giving because old or poor, but the latter characters were required to give as well as the rich. Even the parents of Jesus were unable to make a wealthy offering at the presentation of their Son, but had to make an offering; hence they presented, as it were, a pair of turtle doves or two young pigeons. Christianity should not be taxed to give, in the ordinary sense of that term, but should be taught and so impressed to give—both poor and rich, old and young—till giving shall be looked upon as a privilege and not a duty. I said it should so teach; but I will say, in order to carry out the great commission, Teach all nations, Christianity *must* so teach till giving shall become a realized privilege, and there shall be no lack in Christian progress.

But the keynote in the Christian reference to this unknown widow here is that she gave according to her ability. She gave only two mites, or, in our money, about three mills; but this was all she had to live on; hence it was a true sacrifice, conscientiously wrought. This manner and spirit of giving was commended by Jesus, who had sacrificed all things, even life itself, for human redemption. And this is the manner and spirit in which giving is still to be cultivated.

Jesus did not disapprove of what the rich gave on this occasion, but he could not commend their giving because it was not in the manner and spirit of Christ. It was good,



but not their best effort; not according to their ability, as was the case with this widow, or the widow at Zarephath, who divided the last handful of meal with the Prophet Elijah.

Christendom, in order to Christianize the world, must learn to give in the spirit and manner of this widow. It must do so in order to propagate itself. It must do so in order to follow in the footsteps of its Founder, and hasten the coming of his kingdom in all the earth.

#### SECTION L.—GREEKS SOUGHT JESUS AND HIS DISCOURSE.

John xii, 20-50.

Just why those Greeks named here came to worship the God of the Jews is questionable. However, we will take it for granted that they were proselytes; and, coming up at this time and learning that the great Galilean Prophet was in the city, it is no wonder that they, like Herod, wished to see him, if for no other reason than to cure curiosity. However, we do not think they were only curious to see Jesus, but were anxious to learn of him; so the disciples took some notice of them. Just why these Greeks came to Philip we do not certainly know. There are many speculative reasons given, but we have not space for them. It is enough, and a good lesson, too, that they wanted to see Jesus. They sought to hear him. None can seek him in vain, and none can see him, faithfully, without benefit.

“How would my fainting soul rejoice,  
Could I but see thy face!”

It is hardly questionable that these Greeks knew Philip prior to this; hence they felt free to come to him. Philip went to Andrew with their request, and Andrew went with Philip to tell Jesus what the Greeks wanted.

Another lesson forces itself on us here, that we should lead inquiring souls to Jesus, as Philip and Andrew

did; for we are the light of the world, and the salt of the earth.

Jesus did not now present himself to men's gazing or curiosity, but began to teach. His first utterance was to tell his disciples that the hour for his glorification had come. He, of course, meant the time for him to die; for there was no glorification aside from his death. Jesus then spoke parabolically of his death, yet in well understood language, that the grain must die to germinate. Hence Jesus could do nothing for the world's redemption without falling upon the earth and dying. By his death he reconciles man, but by his life he saves him.

Jesus then laid down the first law of discipleship; namely, self-denial, and not a love of this life for its sake only, for all such shall inevitably lose it. To hate this life is only to love it far less than life eternal. Jesus requires that all his servants shall follow him, and his servants shall always have his presence. Jesus declares that God the Father will honor all of his servants.

Jesus could not get away from the sad thoughts of his approaching death, so he spoke of it again as "this hour." It was a dreadful hour when the just should die for the unjust. It troubled the very soul of Jesus; and this he shows by his prayer here and that one of the Garden.

Jesus then prayed for the glorification of his Father's name. He was anxious for his Father's will and glory, and wanted only his Father honored. The prayer of Jesus was right then and there answered; for his Father audibly replied, "I have both glorified it, and will glorify it again." The people were amazed to hear such Divine speech. They said, "It thundered;" but others said, "No, an angel spoke to him." But Jesus recognized the familiar voice as that of his Father; and told the people the voice was for their sakes, and not his. Jesus had been twice before this

audibly recognized by his Father: first, at the Jordan; second, on the transfiguration mount; and thirdly, here.

What Jesus meant by "the judgment of this world" is hard to tell; but from what follows it leads me to say he meant the destruction of the Jewish nationality and theocracy, which, through their rejection of their own Messiah, were now beginning to decline, and perished by the hands of the Romans. This meaning would make Christ the Prince of this world; and truly he was, being the Son of God. However, he would say to those Greeks and to his disciples, to whom he has been speaking all the while, "If I am cast out of the circles, the hearts, and recognition of men, and from the world, through the shameful tree, yet I will draw all men unto me." From the several references of Jesus on this occasion to his death, the people who heard him were led to ask him: "How sayest thou, The Son of man must be lifted up? Who is this Son of man?" But these questions were the result of blindness and spiritual ignorance. The people did not understand the Scriptures, and proved this by "we have heard, out of the law, that Christ abideth forever." They may have heard such explanation, but never such a fact; for nowhere did the law make any such declaration. Psalm cx, 4, seems to come nearest declaring such an idea; but it certainly refers to the spiritual character and priesthood of Jesus. But on the other hand, many passages do emphatically declare that the Messiah should not abide in the flesh always. (See Isaiah liii, 1-10; Dan. ix, 24-26.) But many passages, speaking of the perpetuity of his spiritual reign (such as Isaiah ix, 7; Ezekiel xxxvii, 25; and Daniel vii, 14), would naturally mislead an untrained mind which was only materializing all the time.

But all the misunderstandings of the Scriptures and errors of the people only showed how grossly ignorant they

were, and how much they needed the light which was next offered by Christ. Jesus said to them, referring to himself: "Yet a little while is the light with you. Walk while ye have the light, lest darkness come upon you: for he that walketh in darkness knoweth not whither he goeth. While ye have light, believe in the light, that ye may be the children of light." After Jesus ended this subject of necessary light to the spiritually-blinded eyes of the people, he hid himself. This act was done doubtless for needed rest, since, as we have seen, he was very busy on this day, which was now drawing to a close. But, after all the miracles and superior doctrine of Jesus, the Jews did not believe on him, as said the prophet Isaiah when he asked, "Lord, who hath believed our report? and to whom hath the arm of the Lord been revealed?" These questions imply a negative answer; for the fact that the Lord hath so wrought upon the hearts and eyes of Israel that they could neither hear nor understand the Messiah and be converted and saved; but this was because they would not, and not that they could not.

What Christ said above, of drawing all men unto himself, began to have its fulfillment ere his death; for even some of the chief rulers believed on him; yet, because of the Pharisees and worldly Jewish sentiment, they did not confess Christ, lest they should lose their synagogue seats, and gain the frowns instead of the smiles of men.

It is sadly strange that men will often see a good man suffer and a righteous cause degraded because it is unpopular to speak for or be allied with them. But to those who have sentiments to fight on account of righteousness, Christ promises his presence and aid of his Father. He said those Jews who believed on him really believed on his Father; for he was the Father that sent him. Of course, Jesus was the Father in character and representation of Divine things; and was man, the son of Mary, in a human

sense. And his work, spiritually, was to enlighten the world and lead it to God for reconciliation.

Since Jesus came to save the world, he came not to bring it into judgment or condemnation. The work of judgment was of the Father, whom men reject when they fail to hear the Son; hence God becomes their Judge, and will, as Judge of all the earth, do right.

#### SECTION M.—DESTRUCTION OF THE TEMPLE FORETOLD, AND END OF JUDAISM.

Matt. xxiv, 1-51; Mark xiii, 1-37; Luke xxi, 5-36.

When Jesus had finished his discourse to the Greeks, who sought him, he left the temple never to re-enter it. But on going out and leaving it his disciples called his attention to the stones of the temple and their magnificent character. But there was nothing in Judaism grand to Jesus—all was pitiable and perishing. The sins and rebellion of the rulers had driven all hope away from the nation and exposed them to their enemies. So Jesus began to point out by way of prophecy: "See ye all these things? Verily, I say unto you, there shall not be left one stone upon another that shall not be thrown down." This striking language gave rise to much thought and concern. So at length Jesus and his disciples reached the Mount of Olives, and here, in fair sight of the temple, Jesus took his seat. And the former remarks, resting heavily upon the minds of the disciples regarding the pillaging of the wonderful temple, Peter, James, John, and Andrew came privately to ask Jesus more questions about the predicted destruction. They said, "Tell us, when shall these things be; and what shall be the sign of thy coming and of the end of the world?" One can but notice the character of these questions, and should. They ask, "when," "what sign," and "the end of the world." By the end of the world, is

to be understood the end of the Jewish age of rule and government in religious affairs, and not the end of time, as some vainly suppose. The disciples wanted to know of and only asked about the events mentioned; namely, the destruction of the temple. And they asked when that should perish; as Jesus prophesied the whole Jewish polity and economy would fall. In attempting to answer his disciples, Jesus forewarned them against deceivers and false Christs. These would deceive for reason of gain and destruction. They would claim Messiahship to be able to mislead and prey upon men, especially believers in Christ. And this prophecy was true; for many false christs did rise up in the troublous times, and many people were deceived and perished in their tread. He also told them that they should hear of wars and war talk, yet such things should not trouble them regarding the end, for such things would happen. For nation would rise against nation, and there would be famines and earthquakes in many places; but these were only the beginnings of sorrows. Jesus further pointed out some troubles they would have before the end mentioned: that they, as his followers, would be delivered to affliction, to death, and hatred for his sake. He then pointed out that, because these trials of affliction, death, hatred, offense, betrayals, deception, and iniquity should abound, the love of many would wax cold; but he assured them that all who endured through these to the end of the time mentioned should be saved, body and soul. And it is true that the believing Christians were all saved when that nation, by the Romans, fell.

Jesus further assured his disciples that his gospel should be preached in all the world (not the entire globe, but as far as the Roman Empire held sway) as a witness against the Jews and to vindicate their cause as his followers; and then that terrific end he named should come. But before the end, and near it, he pointed out some



special signs by which they would know it was near. He quotes Daniel, who spoke of "the abomination which makes desolate;" and Jesus interprets that to mean the destroying army of Rome that would desolate the temple and city. This desolation, or forces of Rome, did stand in the holy temple courts and set up therein their ensigns, which were abominable to the Jewish religion and national pride. Jesus called attention to these signs as indications for them to leave the city for the mountains. And this haste should be so swift that one should not leave the top of his house to get out his goods, nor the field for his clothes, but go on, divested of all burdens, and flee for dear life. He shows that the woman with child would suffer on that account, being unable to escape. He exhorts them to ask that their flight be not in winter, on account of the severity of the weather and roads, making apprehension more liable; nor on the Sabbath-day, thus giving offense to the Jew.

Jesus pointed out further that that time should be the most dreadful in human history; and if we go by Jewish history, by Josephus, it was the most fearful of any world's history of wars. So destructive was the war that none would have escaped of Jewish blood had not Almighty God cut short the work for the sake of his Son's believers.

Jesus again forewarns them against false christs who would, in such trials, lead them astray by signs and wonders sufficient to decoy the very elect. He warns them to go to no place and accept no name for deliverance. Jesus represents the judgments upon the Jews by the Romans as his coming. He speaks of the coming of the Roman army under the similitude of the lightning. Perhaps this is done to point out their swiftness and course whence they came. He shows that the Roman army, like eagles and with eagle banners, would be upon the Jewish bodies as the eagle birds of prey upon their victims. Jesus then declares that immediately after the tribulations of Roman destruction the Jewish

polity of Judaism should grow void. The Jewish system is represented as heaven, with sun, moon, and stars; and these should grow dark and fall. Jesus showed that following the fall of Judaism would occur the sign of the Son of man; this would be evidence of his innocence and virtue, and proof of the wickedness of his enemies who crucified him. His vindication in righteousness would cause the Jewish tribes to mourn to see him coming in clouds with power and glory.

The Savior has certainly in mind here a distant, as well as immediate, reference to coming. His coming is twofold: first, at the end of the Jewish downfall; second, at the end of time, when not only would he triumph over the Jewish enemies, but over the whole world. Jesus declared that he would send his angels, with sounding trumpets, to gather his elect from every quarter. Primarily, this means his apostles were to go with the trumpet of glad tidings to all parts and bring in the Gentile world, since the children of the kingdom were cast out through unbelief. Secondly, it means at the end of time the real angels shall precede his coming, and gather the elect home.

Jesus then spoke the Parable of the Fig-tree, which, as a sign of summer, makes tender its branches and puts forth leaves. So likewise, when all the things he named should successively occur, they would know that the end of the Jews was near. And to show that his prophecy was not of a great distance he declared that the end should come ere that generation passed away. And to show that the destructions should certainly come, he pointed out that his words were firmer than heaven and earth, which could more easily fail than his words.

Jesus points out that no one knew the time of the Jewish end but God; and showed that it would come as a thief, as the day of Noe, when men were engaged with worldly pursuits till the flood came; and so would they,

till the coming of the Son of man to destroy the Jewish polity and the sinful world at the last day.

Jesus showed that the coming of the Roman army would be so precipitate that one could only save himself; for no two together in a field, or at the mill, would be able to escape; since, in every case, one or both would be caught. So Jesus enjoined vigilance, that they be ready for Jewish destruction; that they be ready for death's approach. Jesus then urged fidelity on all believers, and pronounced blessings on the diligent and true. And he showed that if men neglected their diligence and fidelity they would be caught by their Lord when not expecting him; and he would cast them out into darkness, where there were wailing and gnashing of teeth.

#### SECTION 10.—PARABLE OF TEN VIRGINS.

Matt. xxv, 1-13.

Jesus is still on the Mount of Olives, on his way back to Bethany; and it is late in the afternoon of the same Tuesday. After he finished his discourse concerning the destruction of Judaism he added and spoke two parables; namely, of the Ten Virgins, and of the Talents. We will now notice the first. The object of speaking these parables is to exhort to diligence and vigilance. They are the spiritual sequel of the previous material warnings. The disciples had been warned of Jewish declinature and destruction, and how to save themselves in them. Jesus then continued to forewarn against the coming of the Son of man in death and to final judgment, and points out how to be ready; namely, by being prepared when he comes. Speaking of his kingdom, he said, "It shall be like ten virgins, which took their lamps and went forth to meet the bridegroom." Jesus here alludes to Eastern customs of marriage, which almost always occurred at night. His kingdom is like virgins, since it is spiritually pure. The

virgins were wise, as to a part; for they took their lamps, and saw to it that they were supplied with extra oil in vessels, aside from that in their lamps. They were careless (not foolish) as to a second part, in that they went out to meet the bridegroom with only the oil of their lamps, and none to recruit with in case of emergency. Sure enough, an emergency did come; since for some cause that night the bridegroom was unusually late, and did not come till midnight. And while waiting for him till this late hour, meantime with burning lamps, the oil in all the lamps became low; and so very low that the virgins could not have light sufficient to go out to meet the bridegroom and go into the marriage decently. So, when the midnight cry was made, those virgins who had extra oil in their vessels, seeing they could not go through the ceremonies without refilling their lamps, did this at once; and, snuffing their wicks, went out to meet the delayed bridegroom.

When the bridegroom was coming, the unprepared virgins began to beg of the prepared, "Give us of your oil; for our lamps are going [not gone] out." The wise or more thoughtful virgins said, "Not so: lest there be not enough for us and you: but go ye rather to them that sell, and buy for yourselves." And when the unprepared virgins saw no chance to get more oil from their friends they went to the sellers to buy. But while away, and before they returned, the bridegroom came up; and without tarrying entered the bridal-chamber, and the door was shut, forbidding subsequent entrance. The prepared virgins who awaited his coming, of course, went in with him.

After awhile the other virgins returned with bought oil and burning lights; and they said at the door, "Lord, Lord, open to us." But he replied, "I know you not."

Now, to see the force of this parable, we note that the bridegroom represents the Lord Jesus; the feast represents the state of Divine grace in which believers may rest; the

wise virgins represent believers who live upon faith and love, and are in a life of preparedness to live or die for Christ (Phil. i, 21); the improvident virgins represent those who profess Christianity but do not live it, and might be styled hypocrites and classed among backsliders; the oil represents the grace of God in us, by which we are daily upheld; the vessels represent our hearts to contain God's grace and love; the lamp represents the Christian profession, which is to shine so that others may see our good works and be constrained; and the act of their going forth to meet the bridegroom represents our readiness to walk with God in white and do his bidding among men. Some would bring the outright sinner into this parable, but I can see no place; for all these were virgins; they only differed in diligence and vigilance. They do not differ in essential character, as wheat and tares. The whole substance of the parable is encouched in the words of Jesus, "Watch, therefore; for ye know neither the day nor the hour wherein the Son of man cometh." Watch your words, your walks, your deportment, and the force of your example; lest death catch you unprepared to go.

#### SECTION A.—THE PARABLE OF TALENTS.

Matt. xxv, 14-30.

Jesus is still on the Mount of Olives, on the same Tuesday, and speaks this second parable of the talents. The same object expressed in the previous parable holds good here—Jesus is teaching diligence and vigilance. He began thus, "The kingdom of heaven is as a man traveling into a far country, who called his own servants and delivered unto them his goods."

This traveling man represents the Lord Jesus, who was shortly to call unto him his servants, the apostles, and deliver to them the precious truths of salvation.

This man gave the talents through wisdom's guidance;

since it would have been folly to give to every man equally. To one servant he gave five talents, because he showed ability to handle five; and to another two, for the same reason; and to a third, only one. The talent of the New Testament time was equal to \$1,167 of our money; hence the first man had placed into his hands \$5,835; the second had \$2,334; and the third \$1,167. These figures show that the proprietor was a man of means, and controlled large affairs, if the parable was taken from actual life, and not supposed. How this money was put out, whether loaned or actually put into the hands of the servants as any tool, with special orders to use it, is not clear. Matthew simply says, "He delivered unto them his goods." Then he took his journey, leaving the servants to labor till he returned. Just how long the stay was, if real life is in mind, is not known. But, regardless of the time, two of the servants went to work; and the first, with five talents, doubled them; the one with two doubled his; but the one who had only one talent failed to make any use of it, but buried it in the earth. To double the above amounts must have required much time; so the writer says "after a long time" the lord of those servants returned, and called them to account. Then the first showed up well, for he had wrought till his goods doubled; the second reported four talents, which marked him favorably. To these two servants the master said, "Well done, good and faithful servants; ye have been faithful over a few things, I will make you rulers over many things: enter ye into the joy of your lord." When the third man was called, he answered: "Lord, I knew thee that thou art a hard man, reaping where thou hast not sown, and gathering where thou hast not strewed. And I was afraid, and went and hid thy talent in the earth; lo, there thou hast that is thine." The lord of this servant answers him wisely and reprovably: "Thou wicked and slothful servant! thou knewest that I reap where I sowed



not, and gather where I strewed not: thou oughtest therefore to have put my money to the exchangers, and then at my coming I should have received mine own with usury. Take therefore the talent from him, and give it unto him which hath ten talents. For unto every one that hath shall be given, and he shall have abundance: but from him that hath not shall be taken away even that which he hath. And cast ye the unprofitable servant into outer darkness: there shall be weeping and gnashing of teeth." Thus ends one of the most interesting of parables. It carries many important lessons:

1. That every child of God is required to do something for the coming kingdom of God; and he is required to do his whole duty, if it be small or great. No one is excused because poor, or ignorant, or less able than another. And no one is excused because not so excellent a laborer as some other.

2. Every one who fails to do his duty as laid upon him in the Christian activities shall lose his reward, and have taken from him that which he hath, and he himself cast away from God.

3. For the above reasons every day and hour should be well spent in the discharge of our every duty, and so as to employ the talents well which God has given us.

4. We shall all be judged and rewarded according to the works which we have performed; let them be good or bad, much or little.

#### SECTION B.—THE FINAL JUDGMENT.

*Matt. xxv, 31-46.*

The last thing Jesus spoke of on this memorable Tuesday and while on the Mount of Olives was the last judgment of the world. This was a befitting subject, for the reason it was on the heel of his many warnings to be diligent and ready, and because it properly winds up his public labors

as a Teacher of the world. After these remarks were uttered late on Tuesday afternoon, April the fourth, Jesus went on to Bethany, and there remained till the last day of his life.

Jesus declared that at the end of time the Son of man, himself, shall come to a general judgment of the world. His coming shall not be as his first coming, in infant flesh and simplicity, but it shall be glorious and triumphant. He shall be seated upon the throne of his glory and accompanied by the entire angelic host.

As Judge, he will have all nations arraigned before his bar. His first specific duty will be to separate the nations, one from another, as a shepherd separates the sheep and goats. His second act or duty will be to set the believers, styled sheep, on his right; and unbelievers, styled goats, on his left side. His third special act will be to speak to the sheep of his right, and say, Come ye blessed of my Father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world.

The King Jesus will then give reasons for such remarks and invitation; namely, when he was hungry, his sheep fed him; when thirsty, they watered him; when he was a stranger, they took him in; when he was naked, they clothed him; when sick, they visited him; when he was in prison, they came unto him. The righteous will inquire when, where, and how did they do these things unto him; and he will say it was when they did them to his believers. And to those also on the left he will speak, and say, Depart from me ye cursed, into everlasting fire, prepared for the devil and his angels. The contrast comes out here. We see the "come" to the one, and the "depart" to the other; the "blessed" to the one, the "cursed" to the other; the kingly "inheritance" to the one, the everlasting "fire" to the other; the "kingdom prepared for them from the foundation of the world;" the "fire prepared for the devil and his angels."

After he shall order the goats to depart he will give similar reasons therefor as he gave for inviting the sheep. He will say to them, When I was hungry, ye gave me no meat, no drink; when a stranger, ye took me not in; when naked, ye clothed me not; and when sick and in prison, ye visited me not. The wicked shall ask when did they fail to do thus and so, as charged. Jesus will reply, When ye failed to do thus and so, for my followers, to even the least ones.

Jesus says this last or goat class shall go away into everlasting punishment; but the sheep class into life eternal.

These descriptive remarks of Jesus are very beneficial, in that they point out the information of a final and general judgment of the world in righteousness. They point out and help to establish the Divinity of Jesus, since they imply prescience, which belongs to God alone. They give an insight into the judgment acts and words. They point out the close relation of Jesus and his people, which is so intimate that all done for or against believers affects Jesus the same way and to the same extent. They point out our duty to our fellows, and that if we do these duties we shall please God and get his approval. They point out the doctrine of rewards and punishment. They point out that this life is a probation.

#### SECTION C.—CONSPIRACY OF THE RULERS AND JUDAS.

Matt. xxvi, 1-5, 14-16; Mark xiv, 1, 2, 10, 11; Luke xxii, 1-6.

Jesus wound up his public teaching in the temple, April the fourth. After the subject of the last judgment, on Mount Olivet, Jesus retired to Bethany, the home of his friends, to spend the last two nights and days of his life. For he did not go back to the city till Thursday, when he went in to keep the passover with his disciples. But while Jesus was at Bethany during this time, his enemies, realizing that his influence was growing and spreading

mightily, began, as chief priests, scribes, and elders, to form a conspiracy, whose aim was to murder Jesus. They met at the palace of the high priest, Caiaphas, to formulate this conspiracy. Doubtless they met there because the priests were the most interested ones, and to feign justice of their cause. Whenever men want to arouse sentiment for their motives they only need to plead that they are for justice and the rights of their constituents, and with a garb of pretentious righteousness they can stir up the most strife; and the hypocrites always act under false colors. These rulers showed the blackest hypocrisy in the very outset; for they undertook to arrest Jesus secretly, and plotted from the outset to put him to death. They did these things because they were enviously jealous, and knew that with justice they had no case nor ground for complaint. Their malice was seen, in that they wanted to arrest Jesus secretly, fearing some one would take his part and excite popular favor for him. They said, "By subtilty, let us arrest and kill him." How sad, though, is this spectacle! How it reveals the human heart when full of malice, hatred, and deadly enviousness! See the religious teachers of the world sitting in council to darken counsel; to put out the only Light of the world, and murder the only Truth! How wicked and debased were those hearts which conspired to do away from the earth its only Salvation! But the lesson here is "to keep thy heart with all diligence, for out of it are the issues of life;" and the keeping is to the end that malice, envy, and jealousy be warded off, since they invariably lead to destruction and from every Divine and human blessing. We have no knowledge of how long the conspiracy lasted in session, but we infer not long; for each one was very ready to do away with Jesus and get out of the reach of his influence. We may be sure that the conspiracy was intensely earnest and inducing to reach Jesus. It doubtless found the enemies of Jesus and offered

rewards for his arrest. It found Judas Iscariot, who turned to the enemy's side. For he went unto the priests and asked, "What will ye give me, and I will deliver him unto you?" This was just what they wanted to hear, and Judas, one of the disciples, was just the person they wished to find; so at once they promised Judas thirty pieces of silver; for which consideration Judas sought opportunity to betray him. We have here another sad spectacle of human depravity. It is Judas, who chose to become a Christian disciple, and because he could not make sufficient worldly gain out of his office, turned his face to the enemies of his Lord, and for a few dollars delivered him up to the extent of their malice. Some writers try, under various phases, to palliate the baseness of Judas; but if Judas felt that his Lord could extricate himself from the hands of his enemies, as at Nazareth, or that it would lead Jesus to hasten a promulgation of an earthly reign, as was expected, it did not lessen his guilt nor justify his turpitude. Judas was a black-hearted man, and this came plainly to the surface when he, having gone to the priests, asked, "What will you give me?" His love for Jesus and fidelity both dwindled into nothingness before the promise of fifteen dollars! What a lesson is here in the love of filthy lucre; and what a verification of that Bible truth, "The love of money is the root of all evil!"

WEDNESDAY, APRIL 5TH.

On this day of the passion-week the active wheels of the life of the busy Jesus of Nazareth stood suddenly still. Jesus, on Tuesday, wound up his public life and ministerial activities, and on Wednesday retired from all labors and did nothing. How or where he spent this day we know not; but doubtless it was passed in the home of his friends at Bethany, and in deep meditation and thoughtful solemnity; for Jesus knew his end was near, and that already his work

was done. He looked into the faces of the careworn Martha, the anxious Mary, and the resurrected Lazarus as never before while there. He knowingly was seeing them and enjoying their hospitality for the last time; but they did not know this, and they were not prepared to have it revealed to them that the approaching evening was the last night he would spend with them, and that on to-morrow night he would be arrested, through disciple treachery, and condemned hastily to die.

What Jesus did on this day must always remain a secret, if he did any works at all. But since his disciples were with him, and no one records anything done on this day, why, the inference is, that it was only a day of meditation and mental and spiritual preparation for the coming death.

How Jesus must have prayed over the approaching hour of crucifixion, and for victory over his foes who were bringing his death! How sad it was that such a useful, blessed, and exemplary life should be taken by murderous hands from the earth! But Jesus came to die and taste death for every one; therefore, "being found in fashion as a man, he humbled himself and became obedient unto death, even the death of the cross." Hence we pass on toward Calvary, and to the hour of suffering and death.

THURSDAY, APRIL 6TH.

SECTION D.—JESUS ORDERS THE PASSOVER.

Matt. xxvi, 17-19; Mark xiv, 12-16; Luke xxii, 7-13.

We now enter upon the doings of Jesus of Thursday, April the sixth, which was the last full day of his life. Jesus doubtless spent the greater portion of this day at Bethany, where he had been since Tuesday night.

The feast day having come, the disciples, as usual, wanted to enter the Passover services; so they came to Jesus, and asked, "Where wilt thou that we prepare for



thee to eat the Passover?" The question drew out Jesus to act. He called for Peter and John, two pillars, to go into the city and prepare a place and all necessary affairs for the Passover feast. The two disciples inquired, "Master, where wilt thou that we prepare in the city?" The answer of Jesus pointed out either prescience or previous arrangement on the part of Jesus. But when we examine the text there is left no room for doubt that foreknowledge was involved; for Jesus said to his disciples, "You will meet a man bearing a pitcher of water, and he will go into a house before you, and will show you a large, furnished upper room."

There are some facts that could not be foreseen, and must have the prescience of Jesus; namely, the meeting of the man, and his bearing a water pitcher of water, and the kind of answer he would give them. The disciples went on to Jerusalem, and found the things just as they were spoken by their Lord. This Passover occasion was to result in a final opportunity for Jesus to converse with those whom he chose out of the world, in the establishment of the Lord's Supper, and in more fully preparing the minds of his disciples for the things that would befall them, and also himself.

#### SECTION E.—JESUS REACHES THE GUEST CHAMBER AND SETTLES A STRIFE.

*Matt. xxvi, 20; Mark xiv, 17; Luke xxii, 14, 24-30.*

It was late on Thursday before Jesus and his disciples reached the city from Bethany, and evening when they arrived at the upper room where Peter and John had the festal arrangements ordered.

When Jesus entered the room, doubtless very heavy and sad, and needed to meet very pleasant faces and hear cheering things to lighten his load, instead of these he met a bitter contention among his disciples, who were ambitiously

seeking precedence. This ambition grew out of their failing to understand the mission and kingdom of Jesus. Notwithstanding the prophecies of the prophets and the often-repeated declarations of Jesus to the effect that he would be apprehended by the rulers and put to death, the disciples were slow to understand the mission and kingdom of Jesus, and continued up even to his death to expect an earthly kingdom and secular reign of Jesus. And, with such expectations and hopes, no one could wonder at their efforts to obtain chief seats in his new kingdom. And because some had followed longest, others had special relation to Jesus; and because still others had done particular labors and had special gifts, each felt that he had superior rights to preferment. And since it is a hard matter to get men convinced against themselves, these selfish feelings ran into strife. These men were especially contentious on that occasion; for they were aware of some strange happenings to their Lord, but just what they could not understand, and they felt that the result would be the miraculous inauguration of the earthly Messianic kingdom. Yet Jesus does not rebuke their ambitions, but points out, by way of contrast, their relation. He showed that the kings of the Gentiles exercise lordship over them, and those who use authority are benefactors. Yet he points out how the Christian ruler must differ in character and practice from the worldly ruler. Jesus showed that the greatest must be as the younger and the chief as servant of all. Jesus then beautified his teaching by immediately becoming servant. How it magnifies precept when the giver thereof puts it into practice! This is what Jesus always did.

Jesus then called attention to their fidelity. They had continued with him in his tribulations, and, as a reward for their patient fidelity, he pointed out a kingdom. This kingdom was present upon earth as his Church, and is in the heaven of heavens. They were to enter at once upon

the enjoyment of the visible, and finally to come into inherited possession of the heavenly. Jesus points out very alluringly that he appoints them unto a kingdom, to the end they may eat and drink at his table and sit upon eternal thrones, judging as well as sitting with the twelve tribes of Israel. What a marvel of inducement this! These men, drawn from humble stations and from wet fishermen boats and despicable tax-collector's seats and placed upon thrones; drawn from insignificance of human learning, and made judges of all Israel! These disciples could not then see through their Master's talk as they did later; but when they did see clearly they were willing to humble and even crouch for such exaltation.

The religion of Jesus promises so much if men will but humble themselves: for death it offers life; for sorrows it gives joys; for humiliation, exaltation; for labor, rest; and for exile, home. He that loses all gains all; there is really no want to them that seek God's face. Only let the heart be faithfully kept, that pride and vainglory lead it not away, and that it be kept humble.

### JESUS WASHES HIS DISCIPLES' FEET.

John xiii, 1-20.

When Jesus had settled the strife for precedence in his kingdom and taught his disciples what makes truly great, as well as how to look upon the greatest, he endeavored to enforce the lesson of such service and humility by an act of foot-washing. He is by this act carrying out a lesson of humility, which is to be perpetuated in spirit if not, as some say, literally, as the Primitive Baptists do. Jesus, whether or not he cared or intended for his followers to foot-wash, did mean to teach that no duty to our fellow-man should be looked upon as too humiliating; and that no disciple should exalt himself, but in honor prefer his brother; and, if honored at all, let it come by the hands

of others. So anxious was Jesus to teach this characterizing lesson of humility to his Church that he went through with it as soon as he ate the so much appreciated Jewish Passover feast.

Matthew, Mark, and Luke, all three, mention the strife, and how Jesus settled it; but John alone tells us of Jesus washing their feet, and thus enforcing what he taught. John tells us that Jesus rose from supper and laid aside his garments, and, girding himself with a towel, poured water into a basin and began to wash his disciples' feet, and to wipe them with the towel wherewith he was girded. This was a ministering act, and performed by him who was chief, but who became servant of all. Jesus was always an admirable character, in that he never taught in words what he did not execute in deeds. In his humble example he got around to Peter, who questioned the seeming intention of his Lord, "Lord, dost thou wash my feet?" Jesus gave Peter an indirect answer, "What I do thou knowest not now; but thou shalt know hereafter." As has been said, Jesus was teaching a lesson of humility, which could not then be explained to the worldly-minded disciples, but would be understood later in the spiritual kingdom of grace. But since Peter always was impetuous, he, upon seeing that it was his Lord's intention to wash his feet, refused even to let Jesus wash them. But Jesus gave Peter to understand that, without being washed and thus inspired to carry out his Master's spirit always in humility, he could have no part with him. To this declaration of Jesus, Peter yielded, and exclaimed, "Lord, not my feet only, but also my hands and my head." These were the extremities, and show that Peter wished an entire washing of his body, if necessary, to partake of his Lord. But Jesus gave him to understand that the washing of the feet was sufficient to lay claim upon all other duties of humility in the spiritual and religious sense.

Jesus then took occasion to call attention to the treachery of Judas, and spoke of him being the unclean one that affected the whole lump of discipleship.

When Jesus washed their feet he took his garments again, and asked them, "Know ye what I have done to you?" Jesus meant to ask them, Do you understand what I have done and mean? Then he goes on to explain: "Ye call me Master and Lord: and ye say well. If I then, your Lord and Master, have washed your feet, ye ought also to wash one another's feet. For I have given you an example, that ye should do as I have done to you. Verily, verily, I say unto you, The servant is not greater than his lord; neither he that is sent greater than he that sent him. If ye know these things, happy are ye if ye do them."

When Jesus had finished teaching on the line of humility, both by word and example, he again referred to the unclean, wicked Judas Iscariot, whose perfidy was weighing so heavily upon him. But Jesus only made this second reference to Judas to comfort and pacify the minds of his disciples, because he had formerly said to Peter, "Ye are not all clean."

#### TOUCHING REMARKS OF JESUS AT SUPPER.

Luke xxii, 15-18.

Since Luke alone gives us the remarks of Jesus at the supper in the peculiarly interesting and introductory manner in which he did, we wish to call thereto special attention. Luke touchingly and pathetically begins to quote Jesus as saying, at the outset, on that memorable occasion, "With desire I have desired to eat this Passover with you before I suffer." The language here is very strong, and foreshadows the deep concern of the heart of Jesus. He had for a long time looked forward to that hour of final feasting and the purpose to establish a lasting memory of his death through the holy sacrament. Jesus's continual

talk about suffering was grating to the ears of his disciples, who expected an eternal, earthly reign, and felt anxious to enter any earthly defense for him, believing that he would use miraculous means for their success.

Jesus continued, "I will not any more eat thereof, until it be fulfilled in the kingdom of God." Jesus would have them know that suffering, time, and a long dispensation of grace would ensue before he would again sit and eat in like manner with them.

### JESUS EXPOSES THE TRAITOR.

Matt. xxvi, 21-25; Mark xiv, 18-21; Luke xxii, 21-23; John xiii, 21-35.

That four or all of the Gospel writers should mention the perfidy of Judas Iscariot shows that they were no little impressed by the fact that one of the twelve should turn traitor. Since John is fullest of account, as in all other things of passion-week, we will here follow him.

Jesus had twice before this mentioned his betrayal, but not so fully as to point out the traitor as he now does. The treacherous Judas rested heavily upon Jesus, so that it both worried and troubled him; for Jesus was human, and humanly frail. And the troubled, pent-up spirit of Jesus broke forth in these words, "Verily, verily, I say unto you, that one of you shall betray me." These words from the never-jesting Jesus carried worry to the hearts of his disciples, and they began to wonder, Of whom does he speak? and to question, Who will do such a thing? Each man, except Judas, felt safe in himself regarding such a deed. And they all were trying to get closer to Jesus, in expectation of an earthly reign, and in quest of preferment in the kingdom. None were so dejected and had become so faithless and impatient as poor Judas. So they not only wondered, but asked, Who is it? Is it I? At this juncture John leaned his anxious head upon the bosom of



Jesus; and seeing this Peter beckoned to John to ask Jesus who it was that would do what he said. Then John, anxiously looking into the face of Jesus, asked, "Lord, who is it?" This question means so much more than the three words composing it. It asks, Is it I, or Peter, or James, or Judas, or who of us all that will do such a base deed? Jesus replied, giving some ease to all hearts but one, but also giving more sad surprise, "He it is, to whom I shall give a sop, when I have dipped it." This was one of the usually prudent answers of Jesus. He wanted peace and pleasantness, and that brotherly love should continue. But he only knows what would have ensued in that upper room had he made a direct reply, as Esther did, "It is this wicked Judas Iscariot." It is safe to say the meeting would not have ended in brotherly love and a hymn of praise. The indignation of the disciples had been shown once toward James and John for privately seeking the nearest seats in the kingdom; and another strife of words had just cropped out that same night over the same thing; hence we see how frail and human the disciples were, notwithstanding the fact that they were right with Jesus. Jesus pointed out his traitor, but in such a covert manner that he was not so satisfactorily presented; hence no manifest rage toward Judas.

Doubtless, after talking at some length, Jesus took a sop and gave it to Judas, perhaps along with other sops which were given other disciples, or perhaps it was given after they forgot just what had been said of that sop. At any rate, no special attention was given Judas any more upon receiving it; for nothing special was said of it or done about it.

Poor Judas had let down the fence of his heart before this to Satan, and Satan never fails to enter when admitted, and seeks every weak entrance, whether permitted to enter or not. Judas let down the fence by yielding to the sugges-

tion of Satan to bargain the sale of his Master; and the first yielding to Satan fortified Satan and weakened Judas.

When Jesus gave the sop to Judas, Satan came again for admission into the heart of Judas, and, at the first tap, the heart-door flew open, and Satan entered to ruin the poor soul. When Satan got in, Judas showed at times that he wanted him out; but it is a hard matter to get Satan out of any heart; and for the most part he throws down and tears terribly before ever coming out of one's heart. Poor Judas was under the lash of the devil and Satan, but by his own consent, and he could scarcely avoid doing what his new master enjoined upon him. But gentle Jesus, who taught to "love your enemies," was never abusive. All he said to Judas was, "That thou doest, do quickly." How Divine and Christian-like was this gentle reproof; no epithet is applied, and no wrath betrayed! And so mild was the manner of Jesus that no one at the table even knew what he meant by the remark to Judas. And they began to think that Jesus was ordering some necessities for the occasion or for the poor.

Immediately upon receiving the sop, Judas went out to accomplish what Satan had wickedly put into his heart. And Jesus suffered it, since it was his Father's plan of allowance that his Son should die at the hands of his enemies. The act of Judas was the beginning of the great culmination of Divine sovereignty in the man Christ Jesus. And when Jesus realized this he began a very strange conversation by saying: "Now is the Son of man glorified, and God is glorified in him. If God be glorified in him, God shall also glorify him in himself, and shall straightway glorify him." The Son of man was glorified, since he had glorified the Father by proving the perfect man never yielding to sin. When Jesus spoke of the immediate glorification he pointed out that early death which would glorify God by vindicating his justice. Now, as a matter of course,

if Jesus glorified God, God would glorify him as his Son, and not as the Son of man.

Then Jesus continued to speak in fatherly and comforting tenderness, "Little children, yet a little while I am with you. [He was with them but a little while, for it was now growing late, and at midnight he was arrested and taken away from them forever.] Ye shall seek me: and as I said unto the Jews, Whither I go, ye can not come; so now I say to you."

Then Jesus presented his new commandment, or what might be called a portion of the Eleventh Commandment. This commandment was, "That ye love one another; as I have loved you." And this love commandment was to be ever a designating badge to mark all Christian disciples. What a marvelous command is this! How peculiar, how beautiful, and how heavenly! Who of the world's great religionists or reformers ever gave such a command and by which their followers were to be designated and known? Where are Zoroaster, Confucius, Buddha, and Mohammed, and what they taught as the chief principle? How do their principles compare here? What a strange man was Jesus, when he sent out his disciples with the sword of the Spirit and the uniform of love to conquer this ruined world of sin! Yet this is what Jesus did at the end of his earthly life.

#### JESUS ESTABLISHES HIS SUPPER.

Matt. xxvi, 26-29; Mark xiv, 22-25; Luke xxii, 19, 20.

The Paschal Feast, mentioned by Luke only (xxii, 15-18), must not be confounded with the Lord's Supper, which we now treat. That feast was strictly Jewish, while the Supper of the Lord, now being established, was Christian, and to be perpetuated in memory of the Christian death to occur on the following day. The occasion was very impressive, and is mentioned by three writers; but we follow Matthew's account. He says, "As they were

eating, Jesus took bread, and blessed it, and break it, and gave it to the disciples, and said, Take, eat; this is my body." Of course, Jesus was doing a never-dying duty, and one to be kept up by his people while time lasts. So he could truly say, This is my body, or that which represents my body. Jesus certainly did not give any ground here for the doctrine of Romish transubstantiation; for as he had not yet suffered, and as the succeeding ages were to keep up this element which would only symbolize his body, the Romish doctrine that the bread is the real body and the wine is his real blood is absurd; for the bread perishes, and the wine intoxicates their priests.

After the ceremony and eating of bread, Jesus took the cup, and gave thanks, and gave it to them, saying, "Drink ye all of it; for this is my blood of the New Testament, which is shed for many for the remission of sins; but I say unto you, I will not drink henceforth of this fruit of the vine, until that day when I drink it new with you in my Father's kingdom." Thus began the second real sacrament in the Christian Church. Jesus had already established baptism, and now he sets forth another ordinance upon which his Church is eternally to rest. The Christian Church is to keep up the Lord's Supper, since it is the perpetual expression of gratitude for the gift of God. It perpetuates Christ's death, without which there was no redemption. Besides, this institution is a means of grace in the Church, by which Christians grow and survive. The Christian Church, without the Sacrament, would have no foundation upon which to build.

#### JESUS FORETELLS PETER'S DENIALS.

Luke xxii, 31-38; John xiii, 36-38.

Men are frequently being picked up in their own words and deceived in their own strength. Peter was one of those men. When Jesus, in that upper room, spoke of going away

where they could not follow, he was wholly misunderstood as to where and how; and the usual impulsiveness of Peter broke forth. "Lord, whither goest thou? Why can not I follow thee now? I will lay down my life for thy sake." What questions are these! And what a pledge of loyalty! Yet these questions of intense zeal, and this pledge of life loyalty proved only futile. Jesus knew they were impulsive, and it caused him to pick up Peter in his own words and expose his loyalty. Man, as a rule is too frail to make many pledges, and always the fewer he makes the better; for Satan, with his sifter of evil, is always trying, as it were, the coarseness or fineness of every one to see whether or not he can cause them to go through his sieve, or remain within.

Jesus declared as much to Peter, thus: "Simon, Simon, behold, Satan hath desired to have you, that he may sift you as wheat." Nevertheless he told Peter that he had prayed for his faith to stand and not go through.

Every servant of Jesus is sure to have the help of God in conflicts. Then it becomes that servant's duty, when brought out of trials by the grace of God, to strengthen God's other children. Jesus refers here to the conversion of Peter, but not conversion in the common use of the term, but rather when Peter should go so far from his Lord as to deny him with oaths three times, and yet, by the prayers of Jesus, was saved unto faith and apostleship and to return and become the boldest defender of his Master.

However, Jesus did not rebuke Peter because he knew he would deny him. He only asked him a question, and told him what he would do. "Wilt thou lay down thy life for my sake? Verily, verily, I say unto thee, The cock shall not crow till thou hast denied me thrice."

Jesus then spoke of a former commission, "When I sent you, without purse and scrip and shoes, lacked ye anything?" And they said, "Nothing." This former commis-

sion, of course, was temporary and brief, and required but little preparation or equipment. But the commission upon which he is here sending them is permanent and reaching through time. "Therefore," said Jesus, "he that hath a purse, let him take it, and likewise his scrip; and he that hath no sword, let him sell his garment and buy one." By Jesus's reference to the sword is to be understood, not in a hostile sense, but in the sense of defense and necessity. And Jesus commands this bodily protection so much as to advise the selling of a dispensable garment for it.

Certainly that whimsical class that would have a free salvation and a free gospel preached find no foundation for such requests here in the words of Jesus, who hath said elsewhere that "the laborer is worthy of his hire."

#### THE FAREWELL DISCOURSE OF JESUS.

John xiv, xv, xvi.

Jesus, who had so often spoken in parables, sermons, and in ordinary conversation, in these three chapters delivers his final discourse to his beloved disciples. Since the last or dying words of one are always interesting and more noticeable than ordinary, we prefer, in these chapters, to let Jesus do his own talking. It is sufficient only to point out the surroundings and special applications. Since Jesus is so consoling, sublime, and simple in this discourse, given to us only by John, we hasten to reproduce it, that it may be read, looking back into that upper chamber and into that sad night of betrayal, denial, Gethsemane, and the Savior's arrest.

After Jesus had so often spoken of his death, and that his hour was then at hand, how befitting it was for him to begin with the words of the opening chapter! Hear him: "Let not your heart be troubled. Ye believe in God, believe also in me." Jesus then further points out the source of comfort: "In my Father's house are many mansions. If



it were not so, I would have told you. I go to prepare a place for you. And if I go and prepare a place for you, I will come again, and receive you unto myself, that where I am, there ye may be also."

Now, that he might make a further revelation of himself, Jesus suggested to them that they knew the way he was going, upon which declaration Thomas took him up, whence came the revelation: "And whither I go ye know, and the way ye know. Thomas saith unto him, Lord, we know not whither thou goest; and how can we know the way? Jesus saith unto him, I am the Way, the Truth, and the Life. No man cometh unto the Father but by me. If ye had known me, ye should have known my Father also, and from henceforth ye know him and have seen him. Philip saith unto him, Lord, show us the Father, and it sufficeth us. Jesus saith unto him, Have I been so long time with you, and yet hast thou not known me, Philip? He that hath seen me hath seen the Father; and how sayest thou then, Shew us the Father? Believest thou not that I am in the Father, and the Father in me? The words that I speak unto you I speak not of myself; but the Father that dwelleth in me, he doeth the works. Believe me that I am in the Father and the Father in me; or believe me for the very work's sake."

It is to be properly noticed here that Jesus reveals himself as the Way, the Truth, and the Life. He also declares himself as being only God's Speaker and Agent, to bring back the lost world to his Father.

"Verily, verily, I say unto you, He that believeth on me, the works that I do shall he do also; and greater works than these shall he do; because I go unto my Father. And whatsoever ye shall ask in my name, that will I do, that the Father may be glorified in the Son. If ye shall ask anything in my name, I will do it. If ye love me, keep my commandments. And I will pray the Father, and he

shall give you another Comforter, that he may abide with you forever; even the Spirit of truth; whom the world can not receive, because it seeth him not, neither knoweth him; but ye know him; for he dwelleth with you, and shall be in you. I will not leave you comfortless. I will come to you. Yet a little while, and the world seeth me no more; but ye see me; because I live, ye shall live also. At that day ye shall know that I am in my Father, and ye in me, and I in you. He that hath my commandments, and keepeth them, he it is that loveth me; and he that loveth me shall be loved of my Father, and I will love him, and will manifest myself to him. Judas saith unto him, not Iscariot, Lord, how is it that thou wilt manifest thyself unto us, and not unto the world? Jesus answered and said unto him, If a man love me, he will keep my words; and my Father will love him, and we will come unto him, and make our abode with him. He that loveth me not keepeth not my sayings; and the word which ye hear is not mine, but the Father's, which sent me. These things have I spoken unto you, being yet present with you. But the Comforter, which is the Holy Ghost, whom the Father will send in my name, he shall teach you all things, and bring all things to your remembrance, whatsoever I have said unto you.

"Peace I leave with you, my peace I give unto you; not as the world giveth, give I unto you. Let not your heart be troubled, neither let it be afraid. Ye have heard how I said unto you, I go away, and come again unto you. If ye loved me, ye would rejoice, because I said, I go unto the Father; for my Father is greater than I. And now I have told you before it come to pass, that, when it is come to pass, ye might believe. Hereafter I will not talk much with you; for the prince of this world cometh, and hath nothing in me. But that the world may know that I love the Father; and as the Father gave me commandment, even so I do. Arise, let us go hence."

Thus far, in discourse, Jesus has been indoors of the upper room, secured for the feast of the Passover. And it would seem that he had a mind to leave the hall at this juncture, and some writers would have him to go out now, since he refers to the vine with its branches, supposed to be in the garden; but Jesus, having many more things to say which he could not well say on the move, remained longer in this prepared chamber.

He continues to talk and counsel with his disciples. And as he sat at the table and looked at the wine and thought of its source and possible effects, he began: "I am the true Vine, and my Father is the Husbandman. Every branch in me that beareth not fruit he taketh away, and every branch that beareth fruit, he purgeth it, that it may bring forth more fruit. Now ye are clean through the word which I have spoken unto you. Abide in me, and I in you. As the branch can not bear fruit of itself, except it abide in the vine, no more can ye, except ye abide in me. I am the Vine, ye are the branches. He that abideth in me, and I in him, the same bringeth forth much fruit; for without me ye can do nothing. If a man abide not in me, he is cast forth as a branch, and is withered; and men gather them and cast them into the fire, and they are burned. If ye abide in me, and my words abide in you, ye shall ask what ye will, and it shall be done unto you. Herein is my Father glorified, that ye bear much fruit; so shall ye be my disciples. As the Father hath loved me, so have I loved you. Continue ye in my love. If ye keep my commandments, ye shall abide in my love; even as I have kept my Father's commandments, and abide in his love. These things have I spoken unto you, that my joy might remain in you, and that your joy might be full. This is my commandment, That ye love one another, as I have loved you. Greater love hath no man than this, that a man lay down his life for his friends. Ye are my friends

if ye do whatsoever I command you. Henceforth I call you not servants; for the servant knoweth not what his lord doeth; but I have called you friends; for all things that I have heard of my Father I have made known unto you. Ye have not chosen me, but I have chosen you and ordained you, that ye should go and bring forth fruit, and that your fruit should remain; that whatsoever ye shall ask the Father in my name, he may give it you. These things I command you, that ye love one another. If the world hate you, ye know it hated me before it hated you. If ye were of the world, the world would love his own; but because ye are not of the world, but I have chosen you out of the world, therefore the world hateth you. Remember the word that I said unto you, The servant is not greater than his lord. If they have persecuted me, they will also persecute you; if they have kept my saying, they will keep yours also. But all these things will they do unto you for my name's sake, because they know not him that sent me. If I had not come and spoken unto them, they had not had sin; but now they have no cloak for their sin. He that hateth me hateth my Father also. If I had not done among them the works which none other man did, they had not had sin; but now have they both seen and hated both me and my Father. But this cometh to pass, that the word might be fulfilled that is written in their law, They hated me without a cause. But when the Comforter is come, whom I will send unto you from the Father, even the Spirit of truth, which proceedeth from the Father, he shall testify of me; and ye shall bear witness, because ye have been with me from the beginning. These words have I spoken unto you, that ye should not be offended. They shall put you out of the synagogues; yea, the time cometh, that whosoever killeth you will think that he doeth God service. And these things will they do unto you, because

they have not known the Father nor me. But these things have I told you, that when the time shall come, ye may remember that I told you of them. And these things I said unto you at the beginning, because I was with you. But now I go my way to Him that sent me; and none of you asketh me, Whither goest thou? But because I have said these things unto you, sorrow hath filled your hearts. Nevertheless I tell you the truth. It is expedient for you that I go away; for if I go not away, the Comforter will not come unto you; but if I depart I will send him unto you. And when he is come, he will reprove the world of sin, and of righteousness, and of judgment: Of sin, because they believe not on me; of righteousness, because I go to my Father, and ye see me no more; of judgment, because the prince of this world is judged. I have yet many things to say unto you, but ye can not bear them now. Howbeit when he, the Spirit of truth, is come, he will guide you into all truth; for he shall not speak of himself; but whatsoever he shall hear, that shall he speak: and he will show you things to come. He shall glorify me: for he shall receive of mine, and shall show it unto you. All things that the Father hath are mine; therefore said I, that he shall take of mine, and shall show it unto you. A little while, and ye shall not see me, and again, a little while, and ye shall see me, because I go to the Father. Then said some of his disciples among themselves, What is this that he saith unto us, A little while, and ye shall not see me; and again, a little while, and ye shall see me; and because I go to the Father? They said therefore, What is this that he saith, A little while? We can not tell what he saith. Now Jesus knew that they were desirous to ask him, and said unto them, Do ye inquire among yourselves of that I said, A little while, and ye shall not see me: and again, a little while, and ye shall see me?

Verily, verily, I say unto you, That ye shall weep and lament, but the world shall rejoice, and ye shall be sorrowful but your sorrow shall be turned into joy. A woman, when she is in travail, hath sorrow, because her hour is come; but as soon as she is delivered of the child, she remembereth no more the anguish for joy that a man is born into the world. And ye now therefore have sorrow; but I will see you again, and your heart shall rejoice, and your joy no man taketh from you. And in that day ye shall ask me nothing. Verily, verily, I say unto you, Whatsoever ye shall ask the Father in my name, he will give it you. Hitherto have ye asked nothing in my name. Ask, and ye shall receive, that your joy may be full. These things have I spoken unto you in proverbs; but the time cometh when I shall no more speak unto you in proverbs, but I shall show you plainly of the Father. At that day ye shall ask in my name, and I say unto you, that I will pray the Father for you; for the Father himself loveth you because ye have loved me, and have believed that I came out from God. I came forth from the Father, and am come into the world. Again, I leave the world, and go to the Father. His disciples said unto him, Lo, now speakest thou plainly, and speakest no proverb. Now we are sure that thou knowest all things, and needest not that any man should ask thee. By this we believe that thou camest forth from God. Jesus answered them, Do ye now believe? Behold, the hour cometh, yea, is now come, that ye shall be scattered, every man to his own, and shall leave me alone; and yet I am not alone, because the Father is with me. These things I have spoken unto you, that in me ye might have peace. In the world ye shall have tribulation; but be of good cheer; I have overcome the world."



## JESUS INTERCEDES FOR HIS DISCIPLES.

John xvii, 1-26.

After the above final and most remarkable discourse of Jesus to his disciples, he offered the most touching prayer for them that ever reached the ears of the Father. He realized it a necessity to pray for them, since he was leaving them in this life, and was ordering them forth to do the great work of perpetuating a kingdom of righteousness. The first petition was that his final hour of suffering and death be glorious, and that he be glorified to be able to glorify his Father; that he be glorified to give eternal life to all believing on him. He prayed that he might make known the Father to his followers, and declared that such knowledge is eternal life. Jesus claimed to the Father that he had glorified him upon earth by finishing the given duties, and then sought original premundane glory. He specifies his labors to his Father, saying, "I have manifested thy name unto the men given," and declares that those disciples had kept the words of the Father. Jesus further claims that his disciples knew what he said was of the Father, and that he was from God on a special mission. Since the disciples had accepted him as the Messiah and his words, he especially prays for them on this occasion, and not for the world. Jesus especially felt for his disciples as both his and his Father's children. He prays, since he is no more in the world with them, that they be kept through his name, and be one. Jesus realized that his presence had much to do with keeping them, and that his absence would prove fatal without the Father's care; hence this audible prayer must have been very assuring and comforting.

Jesus prays, not that the Father take his children out of the world, but that they be saved in a hating world, and that they be sanctified by the word of truth. Jesus also

broadens his prayer to embrace, as well, all believers in all times, and that they, of all ages, be one in Christ, and brethren. He prays for very intimate relations between himself and his people; that he be in them and the Father in him. He then, finally, prays that those given him be with him to behold his glory given by the Father.

How tender and true was Jesus to those who left their nets, custom receipts, fathers, mothers, houses, and lands to become his followers! He does not leave them comfortless. He assures them that he will be coming unto them in all their trials. He faithfully promised the Spirit of truth and guidance. Now he closes by prayer to the Father that they be sanctified and kept through the truth. He prays that they be lifted up at the last day above scorn, derision, and trials, to the throne of his glory, to be with him, and to behold his original glory and share it with him. How undisappointing is Jesus in all things!

#### SECTION F.—JESUS LEAVES JERUSALEM'S HALL.

Matt. xxvi, 30-35; Mark xiv, 26-31; Luke xxii, 39; John xviii, 1-3.

When Jesus finished the preceding prayer in behalf of his followers, they joined in a song, most probably a psalm, and very likely the One Hundred and Thirty-sixth Psalm, which was the great Hallelujah sung on those festal occasions. When they ended the song, Matthew tells us, they went out into the Mount of Olives. When on the mountain-side, and perhaps seated or standing in a group, Jesus said, "All ye shall be offended because of me this night;" then he based this declaration upon prophecy uttered by Zechariah xiii, 7. This declaration was as astonishing as that "One would betray and another deny him." Yet Jesus did not pause to apologize, but continued, "After I am risen again, I will go before you into Galilee." But as usual the self-confident Peter, who had been forewarned

that same night, stepped forth and began, "Though all men shall be offended because of thee, yet will I never be offended." How manifest is poor humanity here! Peter declaring that he will stand when every other man fails, and yet he is the first to fall. He who would never be offended, was offended ere the usual cock-crowing of that very night. Yea, Peter, who would die sooner than be offended, was offended by so much less force than death. But, as usual, when the other disciples heard Peter so earnestly protesting his fidelity, they all felt that they must at least offer their verbal tenacity of love and fidelity. To them Jesus listened, but he knew what their trials were and what was their weakness and faltering love. These disciples should only have prayed, "Lord, deliver us from evil, and lead us not into temptation." They could not keep themselves in trials, nor save themselves from them; therefore they were in error to doubt their Master's warning or content that they would not deny him under any circumstances. Man is always in error when he declares what he will not do. He only can guess of what will be the issues of life. Man is never more tempted than when he has resolves and pledges to himself or others. Ordinarily, what is a weak or no temptation becomes a mighty trial when one puts up a barrier to his own greediness or a premium upon his own strength.

#### JESUS ENTERS GETHSEMANE AND PRAYS IN AGONY.

Matt. xxvi, 36-46; Mark xiv, 32-42; Luke xxii, 40-46.

We follow Jesus now into the garden Gethsemane. This spot will, along with Bethlehem, Nazareth, and Calvary, always remain very dear to all Christian hearts because of its relations to the life and labors of Jesus. Gethsemane was a small farm at the foot of Mount Olivet, on the east slope of the Kedron Valley, rather more than half a mile from the city of Jerusalem. Joined to it was a small gar-

den, or orchard, a favorite resort of Christ and his disciples. Into this garden Jesus, as usual, went that night with his disciples. Upon entering with all, except Judas, Jesus said, "Sit ye here, while I go and pray yonder." It is useless to ask why Jesus wished to pray under the circumstances; for this was the night of death to him, with all its frightful powers. We gain, however, a precious lesson, that when troubles arise, to call upon the God of help. Jesus does not pray here for his disciples or followers as before, but for his own deliverance from the crucial death to be undergone. He does not offer such a prayer before the entire apostolic school, but took out three pillars—Peter, James, and John—as witnesses; not to hear him pray, but to behold his trial of mind and body. He took them as his posted watchers, and, when very heavy with sorrow, so that he no longer could go without some ray of comfort from his Father, he said to them, "Tarry ye here, and watch with me."

When life's woes are truly bitter, and its burdens heavy, every one finds more comfort in being alone in prayer, so as to be able to plead unmolested and without restraint. There was no earthly help or comfort for Jesus; so he sought, in prayer, his Father's hand of comfort and help. Jesus broke the silence of his grief, and told the exact plight of his mind when he said to the three watchers, "My soul is exceeding sorrowful, even unto death." Then Jesus further demonstrated his grief and burden by going forth and falling on his face in prayer. No tongue will ever sing of, realizingly, nor pen portray fully, the passion of agony passing through the soul of Jesus while stretched out upon the earth during that memorable night.

Jesus prayed, but not generally, nor promiscuously, but very short and pointed was the model prayer of distress: "O my Father, if it be possible, let this cup pass from me!"

The betrayal, arrest, condemnation, crucifixion, and all pertaining to the sufferings of Jesus are spoken of as

"this cup." This prayer is one of the strongest proofs of the humanity of Jesus, but by no means proves that he was only human.

Jesus closed this prayer most submissively and sublimely, "Nevertheless, not as I will, but as thou wilt." All prayers offered to God ought submit to him to do as asked, or not to do; for God is wisest and best, and will do best if it is not to give what is asked.

Jesus doubtless knew his Father would not take away the cup of his suffering before he asked it; but the idea was to teach our duty in trouble and our dependence in distress. He also teaches that we must pray submissively for all things.

When Jesus returned from the lone spot of the garden, he found the three watchers asleep; and he spoke to Peter, saying, "Could ye not watch with me one hour?" Then he urged, "Watch and pray against temptation." Jesus evidently felt the need of the prayers of those with him, and entreated them. It is natural for every burdened heart to say to a friend, "Pray for me in my troubles." This is all Jesus did. But when he found them asleep at that late hour of the night, since they knew not what was impending, he was not willing to scold, as man would have done, but offers a gentle rebuke with apology, "The spirit indeed is willing, but the flesh is weak."

After the first return to them, Jesus went away a second and third time, and prayed the same prayer, leaving consequences with God.

After the third prayer he came, saying to the three, "Sleep on now, and take your rest. Behold, the hour is at hand, and the Son of man is betrayed into the hands of sinners. Rise, let us be going. Behold, he is at hand that doth betray me." It is folly and often fatal to sleep on duty. To a Roman it was always death. Doubtless those disciples would never have slept if they had realized

what was on hand; but the watchman is not supposed to know all the dangers; therefore he should never sleep. However, sleep forever, on that night, left the eyes of the watchers when Jesus told them what had come directly upon them, and urged that they begin going.

### JESUS IS BETRAYED IN THE GARDEN.

*Matt. xxvi, 47-50; Mark xiv, 43-45; Luke xxii 4, 48; John xviii, 4-9.*

Of all the acts of any disciple, none was so culpable as that of Judas Iscariot, when he sold and betrayed his Lord. It evidently made quite an impression on all of the disciples, since all of the writers speak of it. As we saw in the previous division, the treacherous act of Judas occurred about the time Jesus returned his last time to his sleeping disciples; for while Jesus was talking with his disciples concerning the failure to watch, Judas walked up with his crowd, who had swords and staves, and they were from the chief priests and elders. Judas left the disciples in the upper room at some time during the feast, about the time that Jesus pointed him out as the "traitor." He went out and hunted the chief priests and elders, to carry out with them his foul contract to deliver Jesus. When he met them and got their consent to send out a mob, he had an understanding to betray Jesus by a kiss. This kiss of Judas was, of course, for deception; and, had it not been for the omniscience of Jesus, Judas might have succeeded. However, his bad company was rather suspicious.

Judas, in order to prove himself worthy of the confidence of his trust, said to the captors: "Whomsoever I shall kiss, the same is he. Hold him fast;" which was to say, in other words, I will make no mistake in giving you the right man. As soon, then, as Judas walked up to Jesus, he said, as usual, "Hail, Master!" then kissed him, to pretend affection and to avoid detection.



But Jesus, who was ever kind and inexpressibly forbearing, made no unpleasant remarks to Judas, but spoke only as Jesus would have under such circumstances, "Friend, wherefore art thou come?" But the die was cast, and the fiendish purpose of Judas was carried out. Jesus of Nazareth was delivered, and prophecy was fulfilled; for the mob came and laid hands on Jesus, that they might lead him away to murder.

### JESUS IS ARRESTED BY A MOB.

*Matt. xxvi, 50-56; Mark xiv, 46-52; Luke xxii, 49-53; John xviii, 10-12.*

The arrest of Jesus was long sought and planned by his enemies—the priests and elders of the Jews—for this was the class who was mostly hurt and exposed by the influence and doctrines of Christ. They sought and secured the arrest by Judas Iscariot, a disciple who had been with Jesus as an ardent follower.

While there was no violence put forth by Jesus during his arrest, yet it was a very unusual affair. First, it was by an unusual means: a mob who went forth to take an innocent Man, and one who had always taught and worked openly. It was at night, and for the purpose of leading Jesus at once to judgment, which fact was unwarranted; but Jesus, while not resisting, did show that he had protection. He caused his captors, by some supernatural way, to fall before him as dead, which clearly demonstrated that he was God and able to rescue himself, if necessary.

When the disciples saw the manifest power of their Master, they felt it was time for them to help him and prove that promised loyalty; so Peter drew a sword he had, and cut off the right ear of the servant of the high priest. John tells us the servant's name was Malchus. Jesus ordered Peter to put down or sheathe his sword; since Peter was wrong and frustrating the plans of God.

Jesus asked him, "The cup which my Father hath given me, shall I not drink it?" This question and command were to tell Peter there was no carnal fight in the Christian war. Then Jesus, as a mark of his Divinity, gathered into his fingers the ear of Malchus, and stuck it to its proper place, and bade it be healed; and it was healed.

Jesus asked Peter another very important question, "Thinkest thou that I can not now pray to my Father, and he shall presently give me more than twelve legions of angels? But how, then, shall the Scriptures be fulfilled, that thus it must be?"

This question otherwise declares that God could and would have sent all the angels to the rescue of his Son, if necessary and if not in conflict with redemptive purpose.

When the disciples saw Peter's sword sheathed, Malchus' ear healed, and Jesus refusing to make a stand, but yielding to arrest, they all forsook him and fled. This flight was perfectly natural, since their Head had been apprehended, and was being led away, to what they knew not; and, fearing the probable fate of Jesus, they took to flight.

But there was a young man whom the mob seized, very probably Mark; but he made his escape by running out of his loose-fitting garment, to which they held. Just where the eleven, or even Judas, went, we know not; yet we suppose they scattered in secret till no one followed, immediately, and gradually, in a disbanded way, came out. Peter went, as if by chance, to the judgment-hall, to see what they would do with his Lord. It was while there that he got caught in the snare of denial.

#### JESUS CARRIED TO JUDGMENT.

John xviii, 13-15.

It was about midnight of Thursday, April the seventh, when Judas led the mob to arrest Jesus in the garden. And, notwithstanding the display of his Divine power to cause

the mob to fall as dead and to heal the ear of Malchus, that wicked crew laid hands upon Jesus and bound him, as a great and dangerous criminal.

At about one o'clock in the night the captors arrived at the court of Annas, who was father-in-law to Caiaphas. Just why they went to Annas first is a matter of conjecture. It may be that it was more convenient to reach him than Caiaphas, as some would have it, or that Caiaphas was at the house of Annas, conferring about the matter, as others would have it, or that Jesus was first carried to Annas because of the riper age and experience of Annas in matters of jurisprudence, as still others say.

Caiaphas had given counsel to the Jews that some man should die that year for the people. Yet how strange it is that men often say just what they do not intend, and make some declaration which they would not, if they only could weigh the far influence of their words. When Caiaphas prophesied that one should die, and that it was expedient, he spoke the truth and in behalf of the very great fact which he meant to destroy; for the death of Jesus was an essential fact. Whatever may be the reasons for Jesus going before both Annas and Caiaphas, it is plain that it was not to get a proper and impartial trial; for each tribunal was prejudiced, and both sought an opportunity to bring Jesus into condemnation, as we shall see further on. It was, however, natural for Jesus to appear before the high priest first, since the Jews were the accusers; for Jesus was charged with capital offense, to be brought before the Romans, since the Jews could not inflict death. A trial before the Jewish court would prepare them to present the case to the Romans. The mock trial proceeded under Annas and Caiaphas from one o'clock till five in the morning. During this time every wicked step was taken, and false witness suborned, to make ready for Pilate's court.

## JESUS BEFORE CAIAPHAS ALONE.

Matt. xxvi, 57, 58; Mark xiv, 53, 54; Luke xxii, 54, 55; John xviii, 19-24.

Just what was done at the private residence of Annas concerning Jesus we can only conjecture. There certainly was not much, if anything, done; for Annas sent Jesus on to Caiaphas bound.

Caiaphas being the active high or chief priest, before whom Jesus should appear, assumed a formal procedure at his court. Into this court the mob led Jesus; and Peter followed and took a seat in the outer apartment, where a fire was kindled on account of the brisk morning air, which was chilly. When Jesus was before Caiaphas, the priest asked him about his disciples and his doctrine, to which Jesus replied: "I spake openly to the world. I ever taught in the synagogue and in the temple, whither the Jews always resort; and in secret have I said nothing. Why askest thou me," By this reply of Jesus there is much to be observed: First, Jesus had no secret words, but his words were always in public places of hearing. He called upon Caiaphas to ask the people who heard him, inasmuch as he (the high priest) had failed to hear for himself. Caiaphas, being chief priest, should have been leading in audience to Jesus, whether he liked him or not. Then he would have been a proper judge, and not needed to ask of the doctrine of Jesus. It is questionable to what extent prejudice will lead one; but in the case of Caiaphas it had doubtless led him to miss many rich truths uttered by Jesus, and to his own loss of eternal life. When Jesus reminded Caiaphas of his failure to hear his open, public doctrines, one of the officers who hoped to gain some priestly laudation, struck Jesus with open hand, saying, "Answerest thou the high priest so?" to which indignity and question Jesus replied, "If I have spoken evil, bear witness of the evil; but if well, why smitest thou me?" How vain and foolish,

and how palpably unjust was the officer to smite the God of the universe for sinful priesthood! Jesus had not been condemned, nor had he said or done anything to incur such rashness of an officer of men. But through it all Jesus stood, as it were, a Lamb, and in anger replied to nothing said or done against him. There are so many lessons in all the acts of Jesus to bear out his teachings of love and goodwill toward our enemies.

### JESUS BROUGHT BEFORE THE COUNCIL.

*Matt. xxvi, 59-68; Mark xiv, 55-65.*

As has been observed, Jesus was first before Annas and Caiaphas. This, however, was not to the end of finding facts for or against him, but to get up evidence leading to his conviction. We have seen all along that the priests were enemies to Jesus because he uncovered their deception among the people. They were very anxious to get rid of Jesus by death, and it was to prepare evidence to that end that they called Jesus before both Annas and his son-in-law, the high priest. They knew they had not capital powers, and they wanted to go before the Romans with certain evidence to get a capital conviction of Jesus.

At this juncture they got the council together and formally placed Jesus in the front.

One can not fail to notice the Jewish hatred against Jesus and determinedness to put him to death; for there was nothing legal in their transactions. Jesus was arrested about midnight, carried directly to Annas and Caiaphas, and before sunrise, or by five in the morning, was brought into the highest Jewish court. He there now stands, while the chief priests, elders, and all the council sought false witness against him, that he might be put to death. One can not fail further to observe that this council of Jewish leaders did not seek the truth of facts or justice, but false witness. They were aware that, justice being offered and



truth given, there would be no case; so they sought damaging witnesses.

Yet it is sometimes hard to make a falsehood go, especially against a righteous man; so their witnesses disagreed for some time, though they were many. Finally two false witnesses came, testifying to the same end, to the effect that this fellow said, I am able to destroy the temple of God, and to build it in three days. Jesus did, in substance, say this, but not of the Jewish temple, to which this testimony made his words apply.

At the utterance of this corps of witnesses, the high priest, who was burning to get a sentence against Jesus, arose and asked Jesus, that he might get some further hold from explanations or denials: "Answerest thou nothing? What is it these witness against thee?" But Jesus yet made no reply; for he knew the priestly cunning and Jewish hatred toward him, and that their minds were made up to crucify him. The priest still urged Jesus, that he might get some word, "I adjure thee by the living God, that thou tell us whether thou be the Christ, the Son of God." Jesus does not give a direct reply in terms of Yes or No, but does answer the question most affirmatively. He said, "Thou hast said," which expression, among the Jews, was always equivalent to an affirmation. Then he continued, more positively, "Nevertheless, I say unto you, Hereafter shall ye see the Son of man sitting on the right hand of power and coming in the clouds of heaven." This answer was waiving no question. No one could mistake the fearless Jesus. The priest was overwrought in feeling; so he rent his clothes as a token of deep feeling, and said to the council: "He hath spoken blasphemy. What further need have we of witness? What think ye?" Then the council replied, "He is guilty of death." This was the verdict to which the priest labored. They wanted just such evidence to carry from this before-light council to the Romans. Feeling now



that they had a convict, and poor misery had company, they began to show Jesus indignities, to spit in his face, to buffet and smite with their fists and palms. Then they taunted him, saying, "Prophecy unto us, thou Christ, who is he that smote thee?" This is the second time that Jesus received bodily injuries that night.

### PETER DENIES HIS LORD.

Matt. xxvi, 69-75; Mark xiv, 66-72; Luke xxii, 56-62; John xviii, 15-18, 25-27.

Nothing in Biblical narrative is more interesting for pointing out the frailty of humanity than Peter's denials of his Lord. This disciple was always foremost in everything. He was especially foremost in expressing faith in and loyalty to Jesus. Jesus could never get Peter to consider his human frailty. But now it turns out that that bold, unswerving disciple and ever faithful follower who was going to do so much as even to die by his Master when all others be gone, denies even to have ever known him. It happens, too, after forewarning, which was equivalent to forearmng. And it happens on this wise: When Jesus was led before the council presided over by the high priest, Peter followed to see, as a mere visitor, what would be done to his Master. John also entered the court-yard, and, being personally acquainted with the priest, got admission, and secured the same for Peter, who was not so well known. When all were in at the early hour and since midnight, the early April nights being frosty, a fire was built in the open court. About this fire Peter stood, while many others stood, came, and went. At length the girl who kept the door, taking some notice of Peter, asked him, "Art not thou also one of this man's disciples?" Peter, as dryly and carelessly as possible, replied, "I am not." Peter gave as brief an answer as he could to avoid further talk and further notice. That "I am not" came from a low voice and

hung-down head; for Peter felt the condemnation and the fear of his Master's captors. This girl, according to Matthew and Mark, was attended by other girls, and then a second girl questioned Peter about his discipleship. But Luke and John gave more attention to what the men had to say, and report accordingly. Doubtless, when the girls drew attention to Peter, several, both men and women, spoke to him in a taunting manner. But by whomsoever questions were asked, Peter gave negative answers the second time. Finally, one got rather close to Peter. It was a kinsman of the servant whose ear Peter cut off in the garden during the night. He asked pointedly and sharply, "Did not I see thee in the garden with him?" To this one and others who crowded him, Peter uttered bitter denials, backed up by oaths. He even swore that he did not know Jesus, nor could he understand what they were talking about in naming him. Peter's denials are the outcropping of scared humanity. It is deplorable that he was so weak as to let even two house-girls deter him; but Peter was not near so bad as many more enlightened Christians, who now indulge in many acts and words not becoming, and so often deny their Lord at the sacramental altar because of some fostered sin.

#### JESUS CONDEMNED BY COUNCIL.

Matt. xxvii, 1, 2; Mark xv, 1; Luke xxii, 66-71; xxiii, 1.

We have seen that the chief aim of the enemies of Jesus was to get such damaging testimony against him as would put him to death. We have seen when the trial began, and that it lasted till daylight, and by that time Jesus had stood before Annas, Caiaphas, and had been manifoldly accused. But since the testimonies disagreed, it proved somewhat difficult to get the desired evidence. So, very early the elders, priests, and scribes got together for special consultation as to how to get rid of Jesus through testi-

mony. They knew that they had no power to inflict death, so to go before the Romans meant some strong, convincing evidence that would bring about what they sought. They led Jesus first before the council, and put him upon the witness-stand, hoping to entrap him in his own words. They asked him a very touching question to begin with, one which Jesus could not fail to answer without going back on all of his former teaching, and showing himself a kind of coward. The question was, "Art thou the Christ? tell us." Jesus did not answer them as directly as Yes or No, but in a more circuitous way. He replied so as to give them chance for reflection, and to cease, if they would, their wicked attack. He said, "If I tell you, ye will not believe: and if I also ask you, you will not answer me, nor let me go." Then Jesus gave them the reply, "Hereafter shall the Son of man sit on the right hand of the power of God." This answer was enough, and too much for his enemies. It was considered enough, in that it was sufficient evidence to convict Jesus; it was too much, for they hated Jesus, and were not willing to allow any such honors to him. But they went on questioning, and then asked what they considered a decisive question. They thought, as they got Jesus to own up to Messiahship, that they could get him to own up to Divinity; so they asked, "Art thou then the Son of God?" They decided, if Jesus would make such a claim as this before them all, that they would have conclusive grounds on which to ask his death, as he would be a blasphemer and usurper; which things would have been true had Jesus not been Divine. Jesus, as before, answered indirectly, "Ye say that I am." We have seen that this last Jewish expression is equal to an English affirmation. And those rulers so considered it; for at once they said, "What need we any further witness? for we ourselves have heard of his own mouth." So at once the whole assembly arose with this last reply and led Jesus

to Pilate to have him put to death on the charge of blasphemy, or calling himself, truly, the Messiah, or Son of God.

### JUDAS ISCARIOT SUICIDES.

Matt. xxvii, 3-10.

We can not write or think of Judas but with some considerable degree of sadness and sorrow. He was a man and redeemable humanity. Jesus came to die for him that he also might be saved, though he were not. He is an object of pity because he so blundered by allowing Satan to enter his heart and abide till his soul was ruined. He is to be pitied for not becoming what God gave him privilege to become in the apostolic rank; for forsaking that rank after Divine placement there. Judas, however, should not receive such wholesale condemnation as he does. For in the first place he did not have a bad name among the disciples, but was rather a man of honorable record. He was trusted with the finances of the apostolic school, and they never at any time censured him for misappropriating moneys, in large or small quantities. Indeed, there is nothing said against him by his brethren before he betrayed his Lord. His act was base, and no one would think of upholding him for one moment in his treachery; but one has only to look around to-day in Church, State, and society, and he will find many Judases in offices of trust, and doing things much worse than Judas, if only a financial gain is in question. Judas, unquestionably, had two aims in betraying his Lord. One was to get money; and the other to force his Lord to open up self-defense by a miraculous method, in which he and all his fellow-disciples would find refuge, and the establishment of an earthly reign, which they wished and sought. Judas felt that if Jesus could or would do these he could shun exposure for treachery; and if not, he could beg back into Divine favor: but if not

able to deliver himself, he cared nothing further for Jesus. All Judas's plans and contemplations, however, were worldly; therefore the spiritual life of Jesus was nothing to him.

The picture of Judas is a sad one, as seen on the morning Jesus was condemned by the council. For when Jesus was led from it, innocently condemned, and carried before Pilate to get his consent to put him to death at once, Judas repented of his black crime of plotting to get Jesus into their hands. And as a last resort, he took the money which had been paid him and carried it very early to the temple, and offered it to the plotting priests with these words, "I have sinned, in that I have betrayed the innocent blood." This was, on the part of Judas, a fair acknowledgment; but, as in thousands of instances nowadays, it came too late to do good for his soul, or head off the murderous intentions of the priests, who only asked, "What is your crime to us?" But Judas, like many other culprits overwrought with anguish and remorse, cast the offered and refused money down in the temple and went out, and, securing a rope, hanged himself. Thus he went on to judgment, a condemned sinner, earlier than He who followed as the betrayed Lord.

The sad reflections to us of the treachery of Judas are: To beware of the love of money; to beware of worldly ambition; and to beware of self-reliance; and always depend upon God only to save us in times of trial.

#### JESUS BROUGHT BEFORE PILATE.

Matt. xxvii, 11-14; Mark xv, 2-5; Luke xxiii, 2-5; John xviii, 28-38.

It has been shown all the way hither that there was nothing against Jesus but prejudice and hatred. We have seen his arrest by a thoughtless mob, and how he was trotted around from the garden to Annas, to Caiaphas, and to the council, and, receiving only a mock trial, was con-

demned virtually at each place. But the Jews, having no government of their own at this time, could not effect the death of Jesus as they wished; hence, after arousing all possible ill-feeling toward Jesus in their own religious courts and getting all damaging testimony, they went to Pontius Pilate, the Roman governor, to seek his aid in condemning Jesus. But to reach Pilate they knew they had to plead more than religious whims and Judaizing tenets; so they left these off primarily, and charged Jesus with sedition.

Pilate was certainly very foolish all the way through the trial before him. First, he was in great excitement; he was called on at an unusually early hour to enter a judgment leading to death. Second, he had no former preparedness for the trial, and he was not able to get ready; for there stood the howling mob which had just led Jesus to him; not to have him tried justly, but simply to get the governor's consent to carry out their mock trial and prepared verdict, "that Jesus was deserving of nothing less than death." And to enrage if possible the governor, they played upon his prejudices by saying, "If he [Jesus] were not a malefactor, we would not have delivered him up unto thee. We found this fellow perverting the nation, and forbidding to give tribute to Cæsar, saying that he himself is Christ—a King."

The claim that Christ went for a King, and was forbidding to give tribute to Cæsar, was provoking the attention of the Roman governor; for Pilate was there to guard against any uprising that looked toward seditious insurrection. This was his duty, in self-defense and in fidelity to his appointing power. So when Pilate heard the charge of sedition he began to question Jesus, to draw out desired information. His first question was, "Art thou the King of the Jews," Pilate first sought to know, Was Jesus claiming any earthly regalism; if so, over what people? If sat-



isied that Jesus laid claim to any royalty, he would make further inquiry and take further steps. But the reply of Jesus was so courteous and unworldly that the governor soon saw that he had no case on hand. So Pilate said, "Take ye him, and judge him according to your law." This reply shows that Pilate was not up to the Jewish prejudice and intentions. He wished they would not further annoy him with mere Judaisms. But the Jewish hatred ran so determinedly and wildly that it showed itself at once. They said, "It is not lawful for us to put any man to death." They did not intend perhaps to be so prejudicially plain thus early; but the least shake of Pilate's head, or any questioning of their purpose, was the calling out at once their purposed rage.

Those Jews had not done as much as they wished toward raising Pilate's ire against Jesus concerning royalty and tribute; so now, for fear their side would weaken more and more, they became more and more intense. Hence, Pilate again entered the judgment-hall (for he had gone out to hear the Jews, who failed to enter on account of pollution), and called Jesus, and asked him again, privately, "Art thou the King of the Jews?" Jesus then asked Pilate, "Sayest thou this thing of thyself, or did others tell it thee of me?" Then Pilate began to put on the airs of his royalty. He asked: "Am I a Jew? Thy own nation, and the chief priests, have delivered thee unto me: what hast thou done?" This was a very human question in Pilate. By it he would say: "I am not your accuser, I am not of your race, nor of your nation. Yet you answer me as such with impertinent questions." But O! that Pilate could have had his eyes fully opened, and seen Jesus and known him for what and who he was! Pilate would no longer have felt as the governor and lord, but as an humble penitent. How different his future life and course would probably have been in reference to Jesus! But Pilate's life teaches

us the folly of unacquainting our lives with Jesus. For had Pilate sought to know Jesus, he would have revealed himself to him just as he did to the Samaritan woman, or to the Syrophœnician woman, or the dying thief of the cross.

Jesus, however, knowing Pilate was not a seeker after true knowledge, only talked in his usually mystical way. His answer was, "My kingdom is not of this world: if my kingdom were of this world, then would my servants fight, that I should not be delivered to the Jews." Pilate now a third time asked, "Art thou a king, then?" Jesus replied: "Thou sayest that I am a King. To this end was I born, and for this cause came I into the world; that I should bear witness unto the truth. Every one that is of the truth heareth my voice." Pilate furthered his query by asking, "What is truth?" This was a very natural question from the now puzzled ruler. He had made no headway in pacifying the Jews, and none in regard to the real mission of Jesus, who was now capitally charged, with no evidence sufficient to convict.

Pilate finally went out again to the Jews, after examining Jesus both as to his talked-of governmental insurrection and as to his doctrine of truth or religion. He said to them, "I find in him no fault at all." This was indeed wonderful testimony under the circumstances, coming as it did from Pilate. It should have set at rest the mob, and would have had they been seeking justice and truth. But since they sought nothing but the life of Jesus, they only grew desperate when Pilate uttered his convictions and the result of his investigation.

#### JESUS BEFORE HEROD.

Luke xxiii, 6-12.

When Jesus was on trial before Pilate, and no guilt could be found, Pilate was at a loss what to do; and when the accusers of Jesus said Jesus "stirred up the people, teach-

ing throughout all Jewry, beginning from Galilee to Jerusalem," in mentioning Galilee they gave Pilate a new thought to ask, Was Jesus a Galilean? And finding that Jesus was of Galilee, Pilate sent him to Herod. This was Herod Antipas, the murderer of John the Baptist, the one called "that fox" by Jesus, the ruler of Galilee and Perea, and the one once called king by Saint Mark (vi, 14.) At the trial of Jesus this man, Herod, turned up in Jerusalem. There are several ways to account for his presence in the city of Jerusalem at this time. First, it could have been Providential; second, it may have been the occasion of the great festival, which gave him special duties or advantages at this time; or third, it may have been the mere convergence of conspiracy, supervised by Satan himself. The reason Herod's presence in Jerusalem was especially noticeable is that he was not on good terms with Pilate relative to some Galilean citizens who had been butchered at Jerusalem, and he had sustained, prior to now, only estranged relations.

Evil, however, is ever ready to converge and harmonize long enough to destroy the good, though it be irreconcilable to itself. In this connection both Pilate and Herod agreed long enough to take part against Jesus. Pilate, however, was trying to get out of a dilemma. He found no fault in Jesus, and yet he saw no way to please the Jews by releasing Jesus. He then sent him to Herod, that Herod might have some hand in the final judgment against or for Jesus, who had committed some of the charges in Herod's jurisdiction.

When Herod saw Jesus coming he was very glad; for he had heard much of Jesus in his dominions; for nearly all the miracles, the teaching and preaching of Jesus were done in Herod's dominions, Galilee and Perea. Herod was glad to see Jesus, but not in the same sense the Greeks sought to see him. Herod merely wanted to satisfy curi-

osity; he was not anxious to see Jesus to learn of him the way of life through faith and repentance, as did Nicodemus and Joseph of Arimathea. And the result was he got nothing at all from Jesus, who came to seek and to save the lost and dying. Jesus had no power to be spent in vain just to satisfy Herod's curious eyes, and he had no mysterious words to throw away just to please Herod's wondering ear; and the result was, poor, blind Herod got no word at all from Jesus, and saw no miracle wrought at all.

Jesus put Herod to a great wonder by being so perfectly silent when everything that could be said was violently said against him by the priests and scribes. And further to draw some word out of Jesus, Herod caused his soldiers to set Jesus at nought, and mocked him and arrayed him in a gorgeous robe and returned him to Pilate. Nevertheless, Jesus said nothing, but remained as a lamb before the slaughter.

How great is the lesson here! Herod might have sought this kind-hearted Jesus, and been saved there and then; but he chose to play with the Prince of life, and lost his soul's eternal interest. He sought to hear Jesus speak, because he had heard that no man spake as he; he sought to see him work miracles, for he had heard "that no man could do such miracles as he." But alas! how foolish to seek non-essentials and pass the weightier matters of the law! Let every one seek to see Jesus for life.

#### JESUS AGAIN BEFORE PILATE.

*Matt. xxvii, 15-23; Mark xv, 6-14; Luke xxiii, 13-23; John xviii, 39, 40.*

We have now Jesus before Pilate a second time, after a short interval. We have seen how lamblike Jesus was before Herod's court, and that Herod became anxious to get rid of Jesus, since Jesus spoke no word to him, and performed no miracles. Yet there was but one thing Herod could do, and that was to return Jesus whence he came.

So Jesus was ordered back to Pontius Pilate, who, calling the chief priests and rulers, said to them: "Ye have brought this man unto me, as one that perverteth the people: and behold, I, having examined him before you, have found no fault in this man touching those things whereof ye accuse him: no, nor yet Herod: for I sent you to him; and lo! nothing worthy of death is done unto him. I will therefore chastise him, and release him." This is the language of the governor to the Jews at their second coming. Pilate was convinced of the innocence of Jesus on his first examination; but when Jesus went to Herod and was still uncondemned, it gave Pilate a double determination to release Jesus; and this he would have done had he not been a sycophant, and afraid of what might happen to his official position, which he set before his sacred duty.

Pilate's duty was plain in the matter now before him, and had he done his plain duty he would have, in this one case, won an immortal reputation which all rulers could well imitate. This time offered him the opportunity of his life; but, like so many others, he let that grandest of all opportunities pass. Pilate only needed to do what he last said he would do, "release him;" but this he did not do, though it was a custom of the Jews, and he usually followed or permitted that custom. Pilate should have released Jesus, since he himself found in him no fault; since Herod found none, and since he knew, for envy, the Jews brought accusations against Jesus. He should have released Jesus, since to the third time he protested his innocence to the Jews. But Pilate paid little or no attention to justice; he only heard the cry, "Crucify, crucify!" And when he appealed to their custom to release Jesus he gave way to the crucifixion of an innocent man, and gave up Barabbas for relief. This act of Pilate is highly censurable, since he was commander of the people. And the clamor of the Jews for the condemnation of an innocent man who had

passed two tribunals shows where jealous envy leads. For Barabbas was an outlaw, guilty of sedition, insurrection, robbery, and murder; and yet the hypocritical priests and elders preferred to see such a character turned loose among their wives and children rather than the meek and lovely Jesus, their only Savior! How culpable Pilate was even to tolerate the thought of turning loose this notable prisoner; and the Jews, to clamor for his release just to get to Jesus, were the greater sinners! During the while Pilate was trying Jesus his mind was that Jesus was being mistreated; but while this second trial before him was going on, Pilate had his heart touched by a message from his wife, "Have thou nothing to do with that just man: for I have suffered many things this day in a dream because of him." This message must have been very forcible, since it came in Pilate's greatest perplexity and from his wife, testifying to the goodness of a character whom she knew not only through the dreams of that single morning. She testified to the innocence of Jesus, and besought her husband to take no part against him; but, to Pilate's discredit, he did not do as she asked him, for he might have left off the scourging of Jesus.

#### JESUS CONDEMNED AND SCOURGED.

Matt. xxvii, 26-30; Mark xv, 15-19; Luke xxiii, 24, 25; John xix, 1-3.

When Pilate saw he could satisfy the Jews with nothing less than submitting Jesus to be crucified, he submitted. Then he released, according to their clamor, Barabbas unto them. And he scourged Jesus, and delivered him to be crucified. Pilate may have carried out a custom by scourging Jesus as he did, but he was under no legal or moral obligation to maltreat Jesus as he did, since he was convinced of his innocence and had protested it to the very last. Pilate can all the way be seen a wicked caterer to



the prejudices of the Jews, who sought no reconciliation but death.

Pilate's bodyguard, or staff, after the scourging, took Jesus in the common hall, called by Mark the "Pretorium," and delivered him to the whole band of soldiers. These soldiers stripped Jesus of his clothes, and put on him a scarlet robe. They then plaited a crown of thorns, which was placed upon his head, and they put a reed in his right hand. Each one of these things was a mockery. The robe was to point out his royalty, the crown the same; but both to designate him a failing king, with disgrace and suffering. The reed suggested his royal scepter, weak and easily broken. Then, to carry out the ridicule, they bowed their knees before him, and mocked him, saying, "Hail, King of the Jews!" This soldiery was nothing but a rabble, and not half so bad as were Pilate and the Jews, who submitted to such villiany and who perpetrated such wickedness. But God's eye never sleeps, and his judgment is never thwarted; and wickedness never goes further than he permits, and he never permits it further than he can overrule it to his glory.

#### PILATE MAKES ANOTHER EFFORT TO RELEASE JESUS.

Matt. xxvii, 24, 25; John xix, 4-16.

When Pilate saw that he could not release Jesus, and that a strong attempt to do so would cause a tumult, he took water before the eyes of the multitude, and washed his hands, saying, "I am innocent of the blood of this just person: see ye to it." But the bloodthirsty enemies of Jesus muttered, "His blood be on us, and on our children." This they thoughtlessly said, however; for the blood of the very God in flesh is upon them and their children till to-day. And the innocent blood of Jesus is not satisfied toward his enemies, and will not be till every sinner is saved and every Jew is soundly converted to God through Jesus

Christ. And if men never repent, they must die with that innocent blood upon them, and awful will be the death. But Pilate felt for the blinded Jews and the innocently-suffering Jesus; so he undertook again to release him. And he went out to the rabble, after having scourged Jesus, and after the soldiers had mocked him, supposing the Jews were satisfied now, and said, "Behold, I bring him forth to you that ye may know that I find no fault in him."

Then, to strike their sympathy, Pilate caused Jesus to come forth, wearing a crown of thorns and a purple robe. Then Pilate said to them, "Behold the man!" But instead of Pilate exciting pity for Jesus, he only added fuel to flame. The chief priests and officers cried the more fiercely, "Crucify! crucify!" Then Pilate, seeing their obdurate hearts, said, "Take ye him, and crucify; for I find no fault in him."

The Jews then claimed that they had a law, and that their law demanded that Jesus die. They claimed that Jesus made himself the Son of God, and was therefore guilty of blasphemy. And this charge, like all others against Jesus, was without foundation; yet it was used to foster prejudice, and helped men to harden their cruel hearts against Jesus. But when the Jews accused Jesus of making himself the Son of God, they caused Pilate again to feel uneasy. So Pilate called Jesus back within the judgment-hall, and asked him, "Whence art thou?" But Jesus did not reply, seeing that a reply would do no good, since Pilate had yielded every point to his enemies, and would do no better if a chance were given. Pilate felt somewhat provoked that Jesus now gave him no further consideration, and asked: "Speakest thou not unto me? Knowest thou not that I have power to crucify thee, and have power to release thee?" This talk of Pilate was the merest bosh and wholly unbecoming a ruler who had already made himself very pusillanimous by allowing justice to be thwarted regarding an innocent subject.

Jesus knew that the only power—civil, physical, or otherwise—that Pilate had was from God his Father, and it pleased him to call the vacillating ruler's attention to that fact; and so he did, saying, "Thou couldst have no power at all against me, except it were given thee from above." At this Pilate was more convinced than ever that he should release Jesus, and tried to do so; but the Jews, who knew just how to deal with a fearful ruler like Pilate, said: "If thou let this man go, thou art not Cæsar's friend. Whosoever maketh himself a king speaketh against Cæsar." Of course, these were only catch words; for the Jew hated the very name of Cæsar, much less the Cæsarian Government, under which they, at this time, were laboring, as conquered subjects. But to feign loyalty to Cæsar was a scare-crow to Pilate and a mighty weapon to down him. So when Pilate heard their words, he brought Jesus forth, and sat down in the judgment-seat in a place that is called the Pavement. It was now about nine o'clock, and Pilate said to the Jews, "Behold your King!" But the Jews cried out: "Away with him! Crucify him!" To them Pilate again touchingly put the question, "Shall I crucify your King?" Then the priests said, "We have no king but Cæsar." Alas! how men will seize any name to ride upon, if even it is a despicable one as was that of Cæsar to any Jew. Yet here even the priests, to get rid of Jesus, claimed openly the kingship of none but Cæsar. And they so completely bewildered Pilate that he delivered Jesus to a mob, to be crucified at their unmerciful hands.

#### JESUS IS LED AWAY TO CRUCIFIXION.

**Matt.** xxvii, 31-34, 38; **Mark** xv, 20-23, 25, 27, 28; **Luke** xxiii, 26-32;  
**John** xix, 16-18.

When Jesus had been insulted by the rabble by being struck, spat upon, and otherwise cruelly handled, they led him away to crucify him. As we stated, Jesus was delivered

by Pilate to the soldiers about our nine o'clock, which was about the end of the first watch; and the soldiers led him away to crucify him. And as they led Jesus away, bearing his cross, his physical strength, by reason of an entire loss of sleep the previous night, by the inhuman treatment of the soldiers, by thoughts of what a guilty world was doing to him when he had come to save it, gave way, and he could not carry his cross all the way alone. So the soldiers laid hold upon one Simon, a Cyrenian, who was entering the city, and they laid the cross upon Simon, that he might bear it after Jesus. By what authority the soldiers seized and treated Simon as they did, no one seems to say. Indeed, it was, I think, an act without authority; it must have been mere violence, but, thank God, not without its lesson—that One is always near to help bear the cross for Jesus' sake, that we ought, as Christians, help one another to bear the cross met with in life's way. But while Jesus was carrying the cross, a great company of curiosity-seekers and street urchins, besides visitors and incomers, followed him. Yet among the crowd were many sympathizers and friends; and of those the women bewailed and lamented Jesus. To the women Jesus turned, and said, "Daughters of Jerusalem, weep not for me, but weep for yourselves and for your children." It is true that Jesus, as all men, in this great trial needed and was helped by the sympathy of friends; yet he was less in need of their help than they were of his; hence he said to them, "Weep for yourselves and your children." He further assured them that the days were coming in which they should say, "Blessed are the barren and the wombs that never bare;" the days in which they would say to the mountains, "Fall on us," and to the hills, "Cover us."

By this language Jesus meant to teach that the cruel hearts and hands that so wickedly triumphed against him then would need his aid and kindness in the visitations of

his judgments, but would not get them." And we have already seen the prophecy relative to the destruction of Judaism and the Jews by the Romans; and all that prophecy, and even this were literally fulfilled. Jesus further, to emphasize his prophecy, here asked this question, "For if they do these things in a green tree, what shall be done in the dry?" Or, paraphrasing the language of Jesus, he would ask, "If they can so treat me, an innocent man, with such cruelty, what may be expected to fall upon them [wicked as they could be as to murder the Prince of life] from the just hand of God?"

Now, along with Jesus, two malefactors, otherwise called thieves, were led to be crucified. We have no real historical knowledge of these malefactors—not even are their names given—nor any knowledge of their trials, if they had any. It seems that they were guilty of theft, which went without question, and were laid hold upon without special trial, and carried, by the rabble, along, to be crucified. Their fate at this time was doubtless fixed by the Jews, who wished, by them, to make out as miserable an example of Jesus as possible; for to carry Jesus before, as the chief sinner, and to crucify him in the middle, as the worst malefactor, was an attempt to place him on the foulest list of villains.

But while men were plotting to degrade the Prince of life, they were only praising God by fulfilling prophecy; for Isaiah, over seven hundred and fifty years prior, had said Jesus should be thus numbered. And what for? Was it not to reach all men? Was he not designated as a friend of publicans and sinners? Did he not come to seek and to save that which was lost? Where could he have been better shown in his last hours than in the company of sinners, whom he came to save as the healing Physician?

## THE CRIME OF JESUS WRITTEN.

Matt. xxvii, 37; Mark xv, 26; Luke xxiii, 38; John xix, 19-22

We have chosen to call the writing of Pilate, placed over the head of Jesus, a "crime;" it is however, though, called in the Gospels a title. We call it a crime, since it was customary to write the crimes of culprits there, and since Jesus, notwithstanding being variously charged, was not found guilty of but the one charge which we have noticed. When asked of his regality, Jesus replied to Pilate, "For this purpose was I born, and to this end came I into this world." But he also said, "My kingdom is not from hence, for then would my servants fight." He was a King, and the King not only of the Jews, but of the Gentiles. Pilate wrote this crime, and while he did not know it, he did it wisely and well. He had one of two motives in the writing. First, he meant to minify Jesus as a King, which he claimed to be; or he meant to provoke the Jews who had so unscrupulously demanded of him the death of whom he pronounced an innocent man. I think Pilate wrote under the second motive. He had had much dealing with Jesus that day, and had had much knowledge of him prior, at least by reputation; and there was never anything in the life of Jesus censurable; and all Pilate found was good, under the most scrutinizing judgment. So Pilate was only acting officially in the writing, and wrote what he felt Jesus to be guilty of; and wrote it regardless of how it would strike the Jews; and wrote it in three languages, as the ground was near the city, and sent it to be placed upon the cross overhead.

When many peoples read it in their own languages, the chief priests came to Pilate and said, "Write not, The King of the Jews; but that he said, I am King of the Jews." But this conscience-condemning request was too late; the Roman simply replied, "What I have written, I have written." By this he would say, "I will not write it as you ask; I will not



change my text, nor go another step to satisfy you Jews, who have already cheated justice out of an innocent man." Then the writing was tacked up by the soldiers, "Jesus of Nazareth, the King of the Jews."

### JESUS'S FIRST WORD ON THE CROSS.

Luke xxiii, 33, 34.

The most remarkable thing about the whole life of Jesus is his lamblikeness—his gentleness. Throughout his life he was always quiet, gentle, and non-repugnant. When reviled, he reviled not again; but always bore, with wonderful patience, his assailants. His judges were often put to a wonder by seeing how indifferent Jesus showed himself toward his opposing enemies. In the trial for his life, toward the treacherous Judas, the denying Peter, and the insulting soldiers, he at no time spoke a single rash word. He even reached the place where he failed to speak with Pilate; and he never spoke to the mob, while they crowned him with thorns, while they smote him, while they spat upon him, and exposed him to shame. The last time he spoke in the presence of Pilate was to call his attention to the only source of power. He then spoke once more to the women following him under the cross and lamenting him. But after all could be said and done to him, as he hanged upon the tree to save his crucifiers, he was heard in his first utterance to speak; and his utterance was a prayer for his crucifiers, "Father, forgive them: for they know not what they do."

This prayer is so magnificent! It is so divine! It is so unlike man! After the enemies of Jesus had done their worst to him, the prayer of his heart was, "Father, forgive them," with an apology, They are ignorant; they know not what they are doing.

"Did e'er such love and sorrow meet,  
Or thorns compose so rich a crown?"

This prayer is such a striking lesson to all Christians, who are taught here, Praying for cursing, good for evil, love for hatred, and pardon for offense, to even the greatest guilt. For when men mistreat one of the least of the children of the Heavenly Father, he takes it to himself, and is liable to turn the offenders' guilt back upon his own head.

#### JOLLITY OF THE ROMAN SOLDIERS.

Matt. xxvii, 35, 36; Mark xv, 24; Luke xxiii, 35-37; John xix, 23, 24.

One of the strangest things about the crucifixion of Jesus to us nowadays is the levity carried on about the cross by the Roman soldiers and the Jewish enemies of Jesus. It is true they charged Jesus with capital offense, and pronounced him guilty of death; but who would now think of legally executing a man and at the same time keep up a lot of laughter and taunting of the culprit? We could not expect such in any legal procedure, yet we might expect it in an American mob, where it is often seen. And since we see it in the strange death of Jesus—for no one was ever tried and died like him—we can more fully see that his death was nothing else than the result of mob violence. And it shows how degenerate the world then was, and how much men needed redemption by such a one as Jesus. Redemption such as Jesus brought is destined to make men lovable, merciful, and brotherly. It is to take out of them all that callousness whereby man can sit and rejoice at the misery of his fellow-man, whether it be in death or in life. We notice both Luke and John's account, that when the soldiers reached the place of crucifixion they proceeded at once to crucify Jesus, by first stripping him of his garments. And after the crucifixion they took his garments and of them made four parts. This was because each of the four soldiers employed to carry on the crucifixion had an equal claim upon the garments of their prisoner; and they were the more anxious for the garments or parts of the dress

of Jesus since he was so noted. The garments of the prisoners were more used as relics than for any use by the soldiers. The coat or outer garment was seamless, and, tradition says, was woven by the mother of Jesus for him. It was doubtless an exceptional garment in many respects. However, the writers give us no further description of it than that it was seamless throughout, and therefore we dare say no more. At any rate, the soldiers saw it could not be quartered among them without its injury, and each man wanted it whole; so they decided that for it they would cast lots, and thus some one come in full possession, which plot was carried out. But how wonderfully does man carry out the will of God sometimes in jest, in levity, in wrath, and often in raging! Little did it ever occur to the minds of those four soldiers what they were doing. Certainly they never once thought, before the centurion's confession, that they were crucifying the Son of God, and carrying out, according to God's own Word, that very Scripture (Ps. xxii, 18), which referred to their careless and thoughtless act of dividing the garments of Jesus. There is no wonder that the Psalmist wrote, "Why do the heathen rage, and the people imagine a vain thing?" for it is always a vain thing for a man to attempt to do anything against the Lord or his Christ. While Jesus hanged upon the tree in the very throes of death by reason of man's cruelty, the rulers, who ought to have been at the temple carrying out its services and teaching the people God's will, were on the ground of the cross deriding Jesus and saying to the people, as they croakingly spoke, "He saved others; let him save himself, if he be Christ, the chosen of God." Then, too, the soldiers, hearing the religious rulers scoffing at Jesus, joined in to deride and destroy the then heartbroken victim. They brought him vinegar as an offering; for they knew his pierced feet, hands, and head, with all the added indignities, were telling fast his death. Then they joined in

the taunts, "If thou be the King of the Jews, save thyself." Of course the remarks of the rulers and soldiers were only to test the power of Jesus; but this was not the testing time. He came not to come down from that cross, but to stay there till dead, that whosoever believes in him may not die. He died for all men, that through his death men might inherit life. But the testing time was on the third day, when he promised to rise from that humiliating death. Why did not that guard of soldiers keep him dead and in the grave? Did they? No. They themselves went into the city, frightened out of their wits, and declared the manner of his resurrection to the same rulers; and the grave has ever since been an empty tomb. Amen!

#### JEWISH MOCKERY OF JESUS.

Matt. xxvii, 39-44; Mark xv, 29-32.

We have made reference to the mockery of Jesus while upon the cross by his enemies. The reference was, however, brief, and came, it would seem, only from the rulers and the soldiers. But later on it seems that the Jews in general began to laugh at Jesus, and derided him as they passed by. This was a natural outcome; for Jesus had been condemned and crucified, yet he had put up no resistance, he had been derided and shamefully exposed; and it did seem that all hope in him was blighted, and that he was proving a failure and deceiver. And men would, under such circumstances, rightly speak slightly and condemningly of him. And not the rulers only, or the soldiers, but almost any one passing, who could be persuaded that Jesus was justly doomed, and that that ordeal was his end. But since this was not the end of Jesus, and he told the Jews it would not be, but that he would rise again, that people were the greater sinners because they continued to mock at Jesus in his great sufferings at their hands.

Jesus was crucified near the city, and on a frequented

thoroughfare leading into and out of the city; hence many people saw him on the cross, as they went into and out of the city. And as they passed they reviled him, wagging their heads; and they would say: "Thou that destroyest the temple, and buildest it in three day, save thyself. If thou be the Son of God, come down from the cross."

This language of the common people was the outgrowth of the teaching of the rulers. They taught that Jesus was an impostor, and deserved the death which he was undergoing; and, since Jesus did not descend the cross to prove himself, these common people felt that the rulers were right and Jesus was wrong. Along with the mockery of the common passer, the chief priests joined, and mocked Jesus, saying: "He saved others; himself he can not save. If he be the King of Israel, let him now come down from the cross, and we will believe him. He trusted in God; let him deliver him now, if he will have him; for he said, I am the Son of God." When the rulers said if Jesus descended from the cross they would believe on him, they did not mean it; for his resurrection from the grave was a more convincing proof than coming from the cross. But besides the mockery of the common people, the rulers, and the soldiers, even the crucified thieves, who were justly dying, began to deride and mock Jesus. And under such contumely and vituperation at the hands of those Jesus came to save, no one can wonder at the stricken heart of Jesus beginning to break, and at all the occurrences that followed in midair, in the temple, and among the dead.

### THE SECOND WORD OF JESUS.

LUKE xxiii, 39-43.

We have noted, time and again, the gentleness of Jesus and the few words he seemed to speak on all occasions, but especially when he was arraigned before the courts and tried

for his life. We have seen how he submitted to arrest, was carried from court to court, falsely accused, spat upon, mocked, scourged, and maltreated in every inhuman way; yet he had no wrath to show his captors, and no word of revenge for his foes. He did not part his lips at all to Herod Antipas, said but little to Pilate, and spoke not at all to those scourging, nor to those crucifying him. His first word after being nailed to the cross was a prayer that his Father would forgive those who had so vilely abused his body. His second word was to one of the thieves, whom he cheered by promising a place that day in his kingdom. We have seen, according to Lukè, that both the thieves began to deride Jesus; but one afterward<sup>d</sup> seemed to reflect and repent and pray. But the other one railed on Jesus, and was not penitent. He said, "If thou be Christ, save thyself and us." This language, to say the least, was very unkind; but especially unbecoming the lips of a dying man. But the penitent thief rebuked his dying neighbor; for they were doubtless acquainted with each other, being of the same class, and likely in the same prison. He said to him who railed on Jesus, "Dost thou not fear God, seeing thou art in the same condemnation? And we indeed justly, for we receive the due reward of our deeds; but this man hath done nothing amiss."

We gain some few lessons from this man's case. First, that we should speak evil of no one without a known cause. Second, that we should render to every man what is justly due him. Third, that we can labor for Jesus down to and even in death. Fourth, that we should confess our sins to God and our fellow-men, and seek their forgiveness.

After the short sermon of this penitent thief, he prayed, "Lord, remember me when thou comest into thy kingdom." Then came the second word of Jesus from the cross, "Verily, I say unto thee, To-day shalt thou be with me in paradise."



A further lesson here from Jesus is that he never becomes unable to save penitent souls, though they be guilty of murder, sedition, or insurrection. It is that Jesus can cleanse the vilest guilt, and justify before the Father. We also learn that Jesus is not only strong to save, but will manifest his saving power at once. The "to-days" run all through his Word of salvation; the "to-morrows" are nowhere found. He said to the thief, "To-day shalt thou be with me in paradise." We further see that Jesus only wants faith, confession, and repentance put forth in prayer to save a soul; and no soul fails of salvation who thus comes to him on the cross, in the grave, or in the mediatorial throne.

'Only a step to Jesus:  
Then why not take it now?  
Come with thy sins confessing;  
To him, thy Savior, bow.'

### THE THIRD WORD OF JESUS FROM THE CROSS.

John xix, 25-27.

It was about twelve o'clock when Jesus spoke the third time from the cross to his mother. As we have seen, his first utterance was a prayer for his crucifiers; the second was to the malefactor; but it is now to her who bore him into this world as the Babe of Bethlehem. John is the only writer who gives us this pathetic story; and that perhaps grows out of the fact that he, more than any other disciple, ventured to stand by his Master to the end, and was more touched by the striking incidents then occurring. He relates, minutely, that the mother of Jesus and her sister, the wife of Cleophas, and Mary Magdalene stood by the cross of Jesus, and saw his crucifixion, heard his groans, and the taunts of his foes. This was a trio of loving friends of Jesus. There was the love of a mother's heart going out for a noble son, who had always been obedient, lovable, and kind.

There was the love of an aunt, who had learned only to admire Jesus for his goodness; and the gracious love of Mary Magdalene, out of whom Jesus cast many devils.

These women stood by the cross, since they were bound to it by the strongest ties of parental, familiar, and Christian love. No scorn, derision, shame, or cruelty could banish them from Jesus. Yet it was a hard stand, for so many things conspired to make their presence miserable. There were few friends and many enemies. It was truly the hour and power of darkness. It was the occasion which proved a sword piercing the heart of Mary, his mother. Somehow, Jesus looked down and gazed upon that beloved, broken-hearted mother; and he could no longer ignore her distress, but must say something, even the last thing on earth, to her. How many mothers have sat around dying sons, waiting to hear just one more word! Just one last word lives so long, and goes so far! Jesus knew this, and he opened his eyes, and decided to speak that last word. He did, by saying, "Woman, behold thy son!"

Many people think Jesus was not an affectionate son, since he here, and on other occasions, called his mother "woman;" but it is to be remembered that there is more dignity in the term "woman" than in that of "mother"—but this is especially the case in the Orient. But Mary was only God's handmaid to bring forth his Son to the world; and really, after that, she had no more claim upon him than other women. Mary needed her Son's redemption as much so as any one, and it was that fact Jesus wished to point out to her, and call her attention from simply motherly sorrow to the Son's redemption; hence he said, "Behold thy son!" Jesus would have that mother know she needed not to weep for him, but for herself. He was saved, and she needed salvation.

But there was John at the cross. And he was, as far as we know, the only disciple that was. The others, through

fright and discretion, kept closeted. Hence, Jesus said to John, "Behold thy mother!"

This matter of calling John's attention to Mary and recognizing her as mother, now, of John, is a proof of the concern and affection of Jesus toward his mother. Jesus commended her to John, since Joseph, the husband, had doubtless preceded Mary in death. And since such a charge was given from the cross to John, he took Mary thenceforth to his own home to befriend her; for Mary, by this time, was becoming aged, and her other sons seemed to be of but little service to her.

It would be well for every son to follow the example of Jesus toward his parents—love and care for them till he dies, and bless them in his death.

#### DARKNESS VEILS THE LAND.

Matt. xxvii, 45; Mark xv, 33; Luke xxiii, 44.

The strangest thing that happened at the crucifixion of Jesus, about midday, was a dense darkness which covered the whole land.

This darkness was not any eclipse of the sun by the moon, or any other planet or heavenly body. It was a perfect obscuration of the sun; and no heavenly body could, besides, overcome it. It began about twelve o'clock, and lasted several hours, and was noticed far and near.

Some writers would have that it occurred in Palestine only; but it is referred to by different nations as a strange occurrence of which man had no knowledge or warning. Dionysius, at Heliopolis, Egypt, said concerning this darkness, "Either the God of nature is suffering, or the machinery of the world is tumbling into ruin." I think the darkness, if not universal, was seen among the most distant nationalities.

Now, just what the darkness was we can not say; but we are safe in saying it was providentially brought about. Jesus

had been nailed to the tree, in addition to a thousand indignities and insults, and was slowly and painfully passing through death. He was now deep in death, and soon was to succumb to it upon that cross. This was an hour he had prayed against once before arrest, "Father, save me from this hour, yet for this cause came I unto this hour;" and thrice in Gethsemane, "Father, remove this cup; nevertheless not as I will, but as thou wilt." This was indeed the hour of darkness—the hour of Satan and wicked men. No such hours as those dreadful hours from twelve o'clock till three ever have been realized before or since in the history of the world. These were hours when sin and righteousness fought the decisive battle—when justice and mercy locked arms and wrestled; when man was arraigned for debt, and was without the ransom. These hours were the fullness of time—the time sought, prophesied of, and longed for. But in these hours and their full contents, when so much was at stake, God, the Father, seemed to forsake the Son, and caused all the heavens to go in mourning for him, so that nothing gave cheer or light; for the Son had gone into man's stead to tread the winepress alone, and whatever was against man he had to assume and bear it upon the tree. The sun did not shine upon him, and no star ventured its light.

This was not a common darkness, but such as was especially notable, commented upon, and confounding. It seemed to put all to wondering and to silence. It was so affecting that men stood aghast, waiting to see what would follow; for long before this they were persuaded that they were doing wrong and putting to death no natural man. And more: There was something befitting in that darkness; for when Jesus came, his coming was blazoned forth by the glorious brightness and carols of "Good news to men;" but his death, the result of sin and for redemption, should be attended by darkness and cries of distress.

## THE FOURTH WORD OF JESUS.

Matt. xxvii, 46, 47; Mark xv, 34, 35.

## JESUS UTTERS A CRY OF DISTRESS.

The fourth utterance of Jesus upon the cross is a cry of distress. It is the cry of a child to his Father, and should not be wondered at when we consider Jesus was man as well as God. Any son, under similar circumstances, would cry unto a father for help. Jesus was only doing, in a manner of great distress, what he had been doing before—calling upon his Father to uphold his weakened humanity. His cry betrayed great distress, and came just a little before his death and just as the darkness was passing away. It seems that Jesus felt that his Father was approaching, since the darkness was going, and that he needed to call upon him at this moment of greatest conflict, to help him overcome even the last enemy. The cry is very suggestive. It teaches us to call upon God in great troubles, and that God will give us the victories of faith. This cry went up from the childhood speech of Jesus, and comes to us from two Gospels untranslated. But, being translated, it says, “My God! my God! why hast thou forsaken me?” Jesus had been forsaken by his Father, since his Father left him in the hands of his enemies and foes to do to him all they did; but the Father did this since the Son stood in man’s stead and bore what man should have borne.

But this cry is not only to know how much longer the Father would stay away, but that he would come and abide with him, even in death.

And some who stood near and heard this cry, said, “This man calls for Elias.” Now, who these were who made such a mistake we have no means of knowing. They were either ignorant of the full sentence, or they purposely misinterpreted the whole meaning; for Jesus did not even think

of calling for the Prophet Elijah, which is indicated here. He was the God of Elijah, who had been dead hundreds of years, with no promise of even a resurrection; hence Jesus made no prayer to him. But he called upon the Creator in very emphatic terms, calling him, "My God," and thus showing to those who hated and crucified him that he was no deceiver, but owned and recognized by the God of Abraham, who was at that moment his defense.

#### THE FIFTH WORD, A CRY FOR WATER.

Matt. xxvii, 48, 49; Mark xv, 36; John xix, 28, 29.

It is remarkable how Jesus made all of his life conform to the Old Testament Scriptures. This was a cry for water, and while that satisfied physical distress, it also fulfilled prophecy which had been uttered (Psalm lxix, 21) centuries before, but not hitherto fulfilled. There should be no wonder at a cry of thirst from Jesus; for the mob had had him since he left the garden at midnight, and at no time had he been offered the kindness of a drink of water. He had been carried till the greatest fatigue overtook him. He was oppressed by grief. He had suffered the scourges of men, and lost much blood. He had then been crucified several hours, having been led away at nine, and it was now three in the afternoon. He was on the cross in the heat of the day, and the fevers that were now attending his wounds caused him thirst for water. A drink of vinegar and gall had been offered Jesus to drink when he first reached the place of crucifixion; but when he tasted it, in agony and thirst, and found that it was not suitable, but to dull sensations and stupefy the soul, he refused to drink it. But when Jesus at this time cried for thirst, he really and unquestionably needed water. And one of the crowd—perhaps a soldier—ran at once and got a reed (otherwise called a hyssop), and fastened a sponge to the end of it, that the



sponge might absorb the vinegar and be reached to his fevered lips. This was done in obedience to the fifth utterance of the cross, "I thirst." Jesus only uttered these words when all things resting upon him were fulfilled, except the last-quoted passage. When Jesus received the vinegar, some seemed to think relief might come, and said, "Let be; let us see whether Elias will come or not."

After the miraculous occurrences on the day of crucifixion, the Jewish enemies of Jesus would not have been surprised at any manifestations from God. They, like all guilty men, were hourly expecting something, and ready to flee, though no man pursued them.

#### THE SIXTH WORD, "IT IS FINISHED."

John xix, 30.

The utterances of Jesus from the cross are very valuable because of their scarcity and because of their character. He makes, now, his last declaration to the world as the Son of man. He only speaks once more in the flesh, and that is to the Father, that he care for his spirit after its disembodiment.

It might have been said, under the fifth word, that Jesus did not so much cry for water, in need, as to fulfill the Scripture quoted. So when he had fulfilled all prophecy and duties and drunk the vinegar, he made the crowning declaration, "It is finished." But what was finished? It was his great mission to restore a lost and ruined world. Everything relating to the Divine justice was fully met. God was reconciled, and man stood before him in the blood of Jesus, as a Lamb slain from the foundation of the world. In short, the whole plan of salvation was fully complied with, and all men could sing:

"His pardoning voice I hear:  
He owns me for his child;  
I can no longer fear."

So much was finished; and it took so long and such magnificent labor and toil on the part of Jesus to finish what was done. No angel could have done the work of redemption and put on its finishing touches, as did Jesus. No seraphim and cherubim could have done more to redeem man than frail man himself.

#### THE SEVENTH UTTERANCE OF JESUS.

Luke xxiii, 46.

We have now reached the end of the Son of God in the flesh. We shall no more hear his voice in the temple and synagogues. We will no more follow him over the Galilean hills nor Judean plains. We shall no more follow him through Samaria, across the sea of Galilee, nor accompany him to Bethany to see Mary, Martha, and Lazarus. We shall no more hear of him visiting the cities of Tyre and Sidon, or living at either Nazareth or Capernaum. His end is come. He has briefly run his race and finished his work. He is surely dying, and he is praying as he dies. He prays as his people. He prays that his Father come and catch his spirit, soon to leap out into the lap of eternity. He prays that that spirit be protected and kept by his Father's hands; and his prayer is, "Father, into thy hands I commend my spirit." And after the prayer was ended, Jesus gave up the ghost. What a wonderful death! Why? Because it was so divine, it was a sacrifice of love and pity. It was not for self, but for others, and it was not for friends, but enemies, foes, and murderers. It was a gift to men and a ransom from guilt. It was an all-affecting death. It was "That whosoever believeth should not perish, but have everlasting life."

## THE RENT VEIL AND THE EARTHQUAKE.

Matt. xxvii, 51-56; Mark xv, 38-41; Luke xxiii, 45-49.

Along with the sufferings of Jesus nothing more strangely occurred than the rending of the veil of the temple in the city. It was a strange and appalling sight to the Jews to see that veil rent from the top to the bottom, without hands or human force, wind or storm. This veil hung between the holy place, where the priests ministered, and the most holy place, into which alone the high priest entered; and this most holy place was made bare to the eyes of the gazing public.

The Jews could not help but believe that the cruel death of Jesus had something to do with this strange occurrence. The rending of this veil meant much to the Gentile world; for behind it no Gentile could go or even look, and yet there were the Oracles of God, by which every man was to be guided. Jesus made them the possession of Jew and Gentile, and it devolved upon him to open a way to them for all men. Thus when the veil was rent, it signified that Jesus had opened the way of life abundantly, so that every man might see and know God for himself by his full revelation to the world. And with the strange rending of the temple veil the earth did quake and the rocks were rent. These two latter occurrences brought on dreadful fright to the people, and caused the opening of the graves and the waking of the sleeping dead. These dead did not only revive, but arose and left their graves, and ostensibly appeared to many in the city who knew them. Of course, it must be kept in mind that they did not rise at three o'clock on Friday, when Jesus died and when the veil was rent and the earth did quake. The saints arose on Sunday morning after, or following the resurrection of Jesus, who was the "firstfruits of those who slept."

The thick darkness for three hours, the rending of the

temple veil, the earthquake, the rending rocks, the opening tombs, were all for a purpose, and they did not fail to carry. The purpose was God's recognition of his Son and man's conviction, so that he be left without excuse. And we have witnesses in a Roman officer, the centurion, and others with him. They said, under effect of all the happenings, "Truly, this was the Son of God." These Roman soldiers confessed Jesus the Son of God under miraculous demonstrations; but how many now know him, the Son, and yet will not own it, that they might have life! Reader, do you believe on and confess Jesus? We have noticed the mother of Jesus, her sister, the wife of Cleophas, and Mary Magdalene, very intimate friends of Jesus, stood at the cross with John. But there were many other women and friends acquainted with Jesus who came to see his end that did not venture near the cross, but stood afar off, beholding. There are many reasons given why they did not come near, and some are absurd. I think their only reasons were a matter of helpless discretion. They could do no good, yet, at a distance, they could show Jesus their sympathy and love, as far as these could go. While God was talking mightily through the miracles of his power in Judea, yet there were many cruel hearts, like Pharaoh, ready to put to death any hand that interposed or voice that defended Jesus as the Son of God; and the friends of Jesus knew it. And seeing what was done, they smote their breasts, and returned.

#### THE LAST WOUND JESUS RECEIVED.

John xix, 31-37.

It is understood that Jesus was crucified on our Friday, which was the Jewish sixth day. The Jews were at this time observing their Passover ceremonies and in their fes-

tival week. And they were anxious to get rid of the crucifixion and the very memory of Jesus on these occasions and times. So, after Jesus was crucified and the preparation for the Sabbath was upon them (it beginning at three o'clock Fridays), they sought to hasten the death of Jesus and get him out of their way; for their Sabbath was a high day, or what some Americans would call a "gala" or "big" day. And the law (Deut. xxi, 22, 23) ordered that the bodies of criminals should not hang all night. And the Jews did not wish the Sabbath profaned by taking the bodies down during the day, or by letting them hang through it. The day was a high day because on that Sabbath the Jews presented themselves to God in the holy temple. (Ex. xxiii, 17.) On that Sabbath they offered the sheaf of their firstfruits, according to the command in Lev. xxiii, 10, 11.

The manner to hasten the death of the cross was breaking the legs of the criminals. Therefore the Jews besought Pilate that their legs might be broken, and that the three victims might be taken away. Pilate gave his consent; for he, as many Jews, wished to get rid of talk and comments about Jesus, since it all disturbed him much also. And the soldiers came and broke the legs of the two malefactors, who were still living. But when they came to Jesus to break his legs, they discovered that he was already dead, and desisted from breaking his legs.

Then came the last earthly wound of the Son of God. For another soldier pierced his side with a spear, and the wound discharged (which showed it was deep) a large quantity of blood and water.

But the failure to break the bones of Jesus and the gazing upon his bloody side were fulfillments, according to John's account, of Ex. xii, 46; Num. ix, 12; Ps. xxxiv, 20; and, as to the gazing, Ps. xxii, 16, 17; Zech. xii, 10; Rev. i, 7.)

## THE BURIAL OF JESUS AND ROMAN WATCH.

Matt. xxvii, 57-66; Mark xv, 42-47; Luke xxiii, 50-56; John xix, 38-42.

It was, indeed, a remarkable fact that Jesus, the Son of God, died. But also, in addition to that fact, he was buried in a tomb, as all men are; hence he was a man, and no angel, and not conveyed away by any angelic band.

Jesus remained on the cross some time after he was dead; for it was as late as six o'clock before he was buried. The open friends and disciples of Jesus were so timid and bewildered that it seems that they grew more and more helpless and silent. So when the burial was necessary, there could not be found enough of them to attend to it. Then Joseph of Arimathea went to Pilate to obtain the body for burial. This man could do this with less danger than any other disciple; for Joseph was himself a secret disciple of Jesus, and remained so for fear of the Jews. He was also a member of the council that first condemned Jesus, but put himself on record as being opposed to their action. He was a rich man, and exerted great influence. He was a good and just man, who waited for the consolation of Israel and the kingdom of God. There was another strong ally of Joseph. It was Nicodemus, who first came to Jesus by night to learn of his new doctrine and kingdom. Nicodemus was also a councilor, a rich man, and a secret disciple. These two men conferred together and decided to give Jesus a decent burial. Joseph would furnish the necessary linen and tomb, and Nicodemus the necessary unguents to prepare the body. So Joseph went to Pilate boldly and begged the body of Jesus, and Pilate gave it over to him to bury. It was taken and properly cleaned and wrapped in fine and clean linen. The linen wrappings were the usual Jewish shroud. Then Joseph took the body of Jesus to his own tomb, which was near at hand and hewn out of a rock. After the burial, or when Jesus was laid in the tomb,



a large stone which had been prepared was placed against the aperture. The burial was not largely attended. It seems that not even John and the mother of Jesus were there. Mary Magdalene and Mary, the mother of Joses, are mentioned as being present, and saw where Jesus was laid. Not a following disciple of the brethren is mentioned, which perhaps accounts for the meagerness of report from the grave. On the following day—our Saturday—the chief priests and Pharisees came to Pilate and said, “Sir, we remember that that deceiver said, while he was yet alive, After three days I will rise again. Command therefore that the sepulcher be made sure until the third day, lest his disciples come by night and steal him away, and say unto the people, He is risen from the dead; so the last error shall be worse than the first.” This language is a perfect mirror of humanity. It shows the prejudice of the human breast, and how hard it is to kill, to be convinced, and to succumb. What a lesson is here! First to keep prejudice out of the heart, seeing how it tyrannizes the soul and makes desperate the heart.

Pilate said to those priests, Pharisees, and hypocrites: “Ye have a watch. Go your way. Make it as sure as ye can.” This watch means a corps of Roman soldiers, whom the Jews kept employed to guard the temple, especially during their festal week. These companies mounted guard by turns, and some who were not on duty Pilate gave to watch the tomb. And they went first, and made the sepulcher sure, sealing the stone, and setting a watch. The Jews made the sepulcher sure by first placing there a guard to keep off all intruders and by using the Governmental seal to prevent any corruption on the part of the guards who, the Jews feared, would let the body go to the disciples for some gain. So after everything was secured, so far as they could go, they set the watch and left it with strictest Roman orders and punishments, which were always severe to un-

faithful watchers among their soldiery. Of course, the chief priests and Pharisees were just as much determined to keep Jesus in the ground or tomb, as to get him there. And there had been so many strange occurrences in connection with the death of Jesus, as well as with his life, that they had fears and serious apprehensions concerning him fulfilling what he promised, "That he would rise again on the third day." So they took every step to be safe from their haunting fears concerning him.

## CHAPTER VIII.

### FROM THE RESURRECTION TO THE ASCENSION.

#### RESURRECTION MORNING AND HOLY WOMEN.

Matt. xxviii, 2-4; Mark xvi, 1-4; Luke xxiv, 1, 2; John xx, 1.

WE have now reached the most stupendous miracle and the most essential of all in the times of Jesus. None that were wrought by him can compare with this one of bringing again himself to life from the cruel death of Calvary. This is indeed a great miracle, and it is remarkably spoken of by Jesus himself where he says, "I have power to lay it [life] down, and I have power to take it up again." The power referred to is supernatural; for no man in time ever did such a thing. Men have risen, but it was by the resurrecting hand of God; but in this case Jesus was the very God himself raising his human body. The miracle of the resurrection was also important, since the entire weal of man rested upon it. Jesus needed to rise to carry out his redemptive plan and surety to the Father. His love for man, his mission, labor, death, and sufferings would avail but little without the resurrection. The resurrection is the crowning work of redemption. Jesus died for our sins, but rose for our justification.

Now, this great act of Jesus occurred, according to Matthew, in the end of the Sabbath. This, of course, means the Jewish Sabbath, which began about six o'clock on our Friday, and ended, accordingly, on our Saturday. The resurrection, then, occurred several hours after the end of the Jewish Sabbath. And it occurred about the dawn of the first day of the week, our Sabbath, or the Jewish first day. At dawn Mary Magdalene and the other Mary, the

wife of Cleophas and mother of James and Joses, came to the sepulcher to weep and embalm the body of Jesus. Matthew does not mention Mary, Salome, and Joanna, as does Mark. Indeed, it is difficult to get the resurrection accounts to harmonize any way; but this is because we have so little said of them. The brethren who wrote had to be told all they wrote, as they were not eye-witnesses, as were the faithful women. They had grown discouraged, faithless, and fearful; hence they were not good witness to this crowning miracle. Before the women reached the grave, a great earthquake occurred under the causing influence of an angel's descent. This was a very severe quake or shaking of those parts; and the angel came to the tomb and rolled away the stone from its door, and took his seat upon it, as if to guard against its return and to manifest his Divine authority and boldness without fear. This angel was remarkable in appearance; for his face was like lightning, or thus radiating; and his garments were as white as snow. So dreadful was this messenger that the fearless and valourous soldiers on guard shook and became not only powerless, but as dead men. They were wholly overcome and conquered by nothing but the appearance of one from the majestic presence of God. If only a creature of God can conquer, by a look, a Roman army, or that of the great Sennacherib, the Assyrian, so that nearly two hundred thousand of his soldiers perished in one night, what must happen before God himself?

MAGDALENE CALLS PETER AND JOHN; AND OTHER ACTS  
BY THE WOMEN AT THE TOMB.

Matt. xxviii, 5-8; Mark xvi, 5-8; Luke xxiv, 3-8; John xx, 2.

The above accounts by the four evangelists should be carefully read in comparison. The women mentioned in the previous division came to the tomb together to visit

it; and we now notice their acts while there. Magdalene, after missing the body and being informed by the angel that it was risen, seems to have left, through joyous desire, the other women, and run unto the place where Peter and John were, and told them what she had seen and learned. Mary Magdalene would quite naturally go to hunt up Peter and John—for these were the two most leading disciples—and she was anxious for them to come and investigate her story. They could help her rejoice, or, if necessary, take some step to recover the body, if not truly risen.

We now again notice the accounts. When the women reached the sepulcher, they, according to Mark and Luke, went into it; and Mark says they saw a young man sitting on the right side, clothed in white garments. Luke accounts for two men in shining white, who appeared to these women. Just why this difference of report, no one knows. It may be that Mark only heard of one, or that one did the talking to the women, and was alone accounted of. However, no truth is involved or contradiction found. These shining ones were angels of God, and had assumed masculine form. And they caused fear to the helpless women. Yet that fear was so quickly removed; for the angel said: "Fear not ye; for I know that ye seek Jesus, which was crucified. He is not here; for he is risen, as he said. Come, see the place where the Lord lay. And go quickly and tell his disciples that he is risen from the dead; and behold, he goeth before you into Galilee. There shall ye see him. Lo, I have told you."

There is such a contrast between the appearance of these angels now and when they first appeared to the soldier guard. Then the angel descended with dreadful-looking face, resembling lightning; now he has the calm, lovely face of a young man. Then he did not speak, but moved on as bent upon destruction; now he speaks assuringly, to tell

the women there was no danger in their presence as men. They further hastened to tell the women the mission they were on—"to seek Jesus"—but gladly declared he was not in the room of the tomb, and, as proof, called their attention to the place where he did lay. The angel called, then, on the women to go and tell the disciples, but Peter in particular, that Jesus would go before them into Galilee, and show himself openly to them. The question arises, "Why go to Galilee to show himself to them?" Was it not that they knew those parts better, and would be out of Judea, where more danger awaited them on account of Jesus? Jesus had forty days to remain in the world in his resurrected body, and he led his disciples away from centers of prejudice and danger, that he might fully show himself, and finally teach and commission them.

There can be no denying the fact that the resurrected body and message of the angels broke up the weeping visit of the women. They departed quickly from the sepulcher with both fear and joy. The fear was reverential and that some one of the enemies might turn up against them, since the tomb was empty and they had been there. However, when Matthew says "They departed quickly," it must be understood of only Magdalene, and perhaps one more, who went to tell Peter and John, while the others lingered awhile about the tomb.

#### PETER AND JOHN ARRIVE AT THE TOMB.

Luke xxiv, 12; John xx, 8-10.

When John and Peter heard the story of Mary Magdalene, they at once arose in haste to reach the tomb. They, through joyous excitement and expectant hope, went in a run to the sepulcher. John, being younger and more alert, outran Peter to the tomb. John stooped down to look into the tomb and saw the linen which Joseph provided for the



burial. John only looked into the tomb; but when Peter reached it, he walked right on in, to behold all things therein. The napkin that was about the head of Jesus was not with the linen, but lying alone. The wrapped-up napkin and linen cloths showed by their form that Jesus came not out of the grave in frightened haste, but calmly arose, undressed himself of the tied parts of linen, laid it aside, wrapped up the napkin, putting it to itself, then left the tomb.

After Peter entered the tomb and was convinced himself that Jesus was not there, he came out and stood and walked, wondering at what had happened. John also entered the tomb after Peter, and was also a witness to the resurrected body. But even after this most thorough evidence and declaration of the resurrection of Jesus, Peter and John were unable fully to understand and believe the Scriptures concerning this great miracle. It was too good to be believed by them. They were leading disciples, yet they had to be called to the tomb to see their risen Lord by a weakly woman. They were so blind to the understanding of all that Jesus told them that they returned to their own homes.

### JESUS APPEARS TO MARY MAGDALENE.

Mark xvi, 9-11; John xx, 11-18.

#### FIRST APPEARANCE.

The angelic appearances and declaration that Jesus was not in the grave, but risen, as he said, were glorious and cheering tidings to the early visiting women and disciples of Jesus; but nothing was so soothing and cheering as a single appearance of Jesus to human belated eyes.

When the angels declared that Jesus was risen, it was so joyous that it could hardly be believed; and the angel said, "Fear not, but come see, for the sake of your faith,

the place where the Lord lay." To see the burial linen, the head napkin, and the empty tomb were all convincing proofs of a resurrection, but not so strong as the appearance and familiar, loving voice of Jesus once more. So Jesus decided to show himself, inasmuch as his now spiritual body was invisible and immortal. But since he was to make many appearances of his resurrected body, it pleased him to make the first to that always faithful woman, Mary Magdalene. It does look that this was most befitting, since Mary had ever been true and faithful from the time the seven devils were cast out of her and her sins were forgiven. She ever followed Jesus, and administered to him and his disciples. She knew no peril or threat to drive her away, but stood by Jesus in his darkest hours, when in the hands of the cruel mob, and followed him to the grave. This was fidelity even unto death. She came early the first day of the week to visit the tomb and still to show her fidelity to her beloved Lord; but when agreeably surprised by the angels declaring her Lord risen, as he told her, and seeing the empty tomb, she hastily left the tomb and ran for Peter and John, to tell of her visions and what the angels said. Mary Magdalene was the untiring, indefatigable message-bearer and worker for Jesus. No task was too irksome, no speed too hasty, and no distance too great to make, if it but brought pleasure to her beloved Lord.

When Mary brought Peter and John to the tomb, and they both were satisfied with her story, though they saw not the angels and had no talk with them, but returned to the city, awaiting further developments, Mary staid in the garden about the tomb. She seems to have been so full of anxiety about her Lord that she could not leave even the last resting-place of his now declared resurrected body. She lingered and trusted and hoped and wept. While in this attitude, she stooped down to take another hopeful look, and saw two angels again. At this time the one sat

at the head and the other at the foot of the sepulcher. These messengers spoke to the now lone Mary; for Peter, John, and the other women were gone to spread the joyful tidings to other friends. The angels asked, "Woman, why weepest thou?" Mary replied, "Because they have taken away my Lord, and I know not where they have laid him."

Just as Mary finished speaking, she turned, and, for the first time, Jesus showed himself to her. But the appearance was too much for Mary to take in instantly. The joy would perhaps have killed her, and especially since she was already much depressed through intense grief during the last three heart-breaking days of the cruel passion. Jesus knew Mary's weakness, so he revealed himself to her gradually. After he had shown his unknown body to her, he then gave a more familiar evidence of himself. He said, "Woman, why weepest thou? Whom seekest thou?" But not yet did Mary fully know him, but supposed him the gardener, since he seemed ignorant of her troubles. So she said to the supposed gardener, "Sir, if thou hast borne him hence, tell me where thou hast laid him, and I will take him away." Right here the gradual introduction broke into full splendor; for Jesus spoke as he had always done. He said, "Mary." That was enough. She turned herself again, and said, "Rabboni, my Master." Then she, with joy, began to touch him; but he said, "Touch me not; for I am not yet ascended to my Father, but go to my brethren, and say unto them, I ascend unto my Father and your Father, and to my God and your God."

Mary now had indeed a great story. It was not as the first. Before she told of the message of angels and the empty tomb. Now she tells that "I have even seen the risen Lord," and brings the happy news that he calls his followers brethren, and his Father their Father, and his God their God, to whom he will ascend for them.

## JESUS APPEARS TO THE WOMEN.

Matt. xxviii, 9, 10; Luke xxiv, 9-11.

## SECOND APPEARANCE.

The women who first went to the sepulcher were Mary Magdalene, Joanna, Mary the mother of James, and others, not named, if known by the apostles. When they reached the tomb and saw the angels and heard their message, glad Mary Magdalene ran to find Peter and John. But while these were being found, and before they arrived perhaps, the women band who were originally with Mary left the tomb to return unto their homes or lodgings. And while returning by the way, Jesus showed himself to them. These women were going to perform the message of the angels who said, "Tell his disciples and Peter that he is risen." The second appearance was on this wise: As the women walked, Jesus met them and said, "All hail!" And they came and grasped his feet, and worshiped him. But they needed assurance in this mysterious company; for they trembled without and burned within. Jesus said, "Be not afraid. Go tell my brethren, that they go into Galilee, and there shall they see me." This second appearance was more positive than the first; for the first was to one witness only, and then without handling. But this one was with handling and to several. It was also attended with reassuring words. These first two appearances were very positive, convincing, and encouraging. They went far to establish the faith of these faithful and abiding women. And no more faithful witnesses could be found in the earth to first declare the glorious resurrection.

## THE GUARD REPORT THE RESURRECTION.

Matt. xxviii, 11-15.

It can be no strange thing that the grave guards should report the resurrection; since, in the first place, they were put there under arms to prevent that very occurrence.

They were to keep that body in the tomb, or give some good reason why it was out. They were overcome by a shining one, whose countenance was like lightning; yet he used no sword, made no effort, and spoke no word. Under his mere appearance the guard fell as dead men; and when they came to themselves, the stone had been moved away, and the tomb robbed of its victim. There lay the grave clothes, but no body. This was very strange and wholly new experience to the guards. For the shining one was first seen above the earth, and overcame them by mere appearance.

They had never seen a man that could overcome them as Romans; for the world was at their feet. They could not claim negligence of duty or sleep; for both were death to Roman guards. So they frankly and boldly went into the city, and got together the priests and elders, and showed them what happened at the tomb. The elders and priests, being completely outdone, counseled to give the guards large money to make a false report. It was to the effect that they were to say that "His disciples came by night, and stole Jesus while they slept." The priests and elders further bribed the guard by telling them, if the governor complained of their negligence, they would stand between them and the governor. And the story was told by the guards and kept up among the Jews to the time Matthew wrote his Gospel.

### JESUS APPEARS TO TWO DISCIPLES.

Mark xvi, 12, 13; Luke xxiv, 13-35.

#### THIRD APPEARANCE.

Mark and Luke only give us this third appearance of Jesus after his resurrection. Mark only mentions it; hence we must depend upon Luke almost entirely for details. This appearance was to two disciples, as they left the city, Jeru-

salem, and walked to Emmaus, a village about seven and one-half miles away. These took the walk on the same day of the resurrection. Just who these disciples were is not known, except in one case, as one is called Cleopas; but the other can never be known, since Luke does not say. There have been many guesses. Among the guesses is Luke himself. I think this is the most likely, since Luke names one and says nothing of the other—a fact hardly probable, had it been some other disciple than himself.

This third appearance was as follows: As the two walked and talked together of the crucifixion and all its connections, Jesus himself drew near and went with them on the way. But their eyes were so held that they could not see that it was the very Christ. They would have become so overjoyed that Jesus could never have opened the Scriptures to them concerning himself had he suffered them to know him from the first. So while he had them, he asked, "What manner of communications are these that ye have one with another, as ye walk, and are sad?" Cleopas replied, "Art thou only a stranger in Jerusalem, and hast not known the things which are come to pass there in these days?" Jesus asked, "What things?" And they said, "Concerning Jesus of Nazareth, which was a Prophet mighty in deed and word before God and all the people; and how the chief priests and our rulers delivered him to be condemned to death, and have crucified him. But we trusted that it had been he which should have redeemed Israel: and beside all this, to-day is the third day since these things were done. Yea, and certain women also of our company made us astonished, which were early at the sepulcher. And when they found not his body, they came, saying that they had also seen a vision of angels, which said that he was alive. And certain of those which were with us [Peter and John] went to the sepulcher, and found it even so as the women



had said; but him they saw not." This is their tale of woe, and, when fully related, Jesus had a great opportunity to set them right and then impressively reveal himself to them. He began to talk: "O fools and slow of heart to believe all that the prophets have spoken, was it not necessary for Christ to have suffered these things and to enter into his glory?" Then Jesus began with the Pentateuch, or first five books of the Bible, going through the prophetic writings, and expounded unto them in all the Scriptures the things concerning himself.

And when they came near to Emmaus, Jesus acted as if he would pass on, but they persuaded him to stop, at least awhile, as it was late. They made ready supper, and Jesus, in his usual manner, took bread and blessed it, and broke, and gave it to them. Just then he turned loose their holden eyes, which were opened, and they knew him, which caused him to vanish out of their sight. Then they began to talk, "Did not our heart burn within us while he talked with us by the way and while he opened to us the Scriptures?" This was too much and too good news for them to keep. They got up the same hour, and hastened back to Jerusalem, to tell the story to the eleven disciples, who said to them joyfully, "The Lord is risen indeed, and hath appeared to Simon." Then they related all that was done in their way, and how Jesus was revealed to them by his familiar breaking, blessing, and eating of bread.

#### JESUS APPEARS TO SIMON PETER.

1 Cor. xv, 5. 1

#### FOURTH APPEARANCE.

All the appearances of Jesus thus far were on the same day that he rose. Even this account by St. Paul took place at Jerusalem on the day of the resurrection. It has not

any specific details. It is only declared by Paul that Jesus did appear to Peter before he did to the Twelve. But aside from the fact that this appearance was at Jerusalem we know not anything. It occurred, it seems, during the day, to Peter alone. He in wanderings had gone perhaps out from all others, and Jesus appeared to him, as a future pillar in his Church, that his faith might grow brighter and stronger. And that he, being converted, might strengthen his brethren.

#### JESUS APPEARS TO THE TWELVE, EXCEPT THOMAS.

Mark xvi, 14; Luke xxiv, 36-48; John xx, 19-23.

##### FIFTH APPEARANCE.

Jesus is still appearing on the first day of his resurrection. After all the above appearances he showed himself to the Twelve, at Jerusalem assembled, except Thomas, of whom we can not account at present. When Jesus appeared to the school of his to-be apostles, they were in a poor state of faith to receive him. However, he appeared and stood suddenly in their midst and said, "Peace be unto you." This expression and appearance caused fright; for the disciples thought they had seen a spirit. But Jesus asked them: "Why are ye troubled, and why do thoughts arise in your hearts? Behold my hands and my feet, that it is I myself. Handle me, and see; for a spirit has not flesh and bones, as ye see me have." Then Jesus manifested his wounded hands and feet as further proof. This gave them such joy that they could hardly believe their own eyes. Meantime he asked them for meat, and received fish and honey, and ate before them. Then Jesus called their attention to former things spoken of by him to them, that they might remember and grow strong. He also instructed them in the Scriptures, and said, "Thus it is written, and thus it behooved Christ to suffer and to rise from the dead

the third day. And that repentance and remission of sins should be preached in his name among the nations, beginning at Jerusalem." Then Jesus declared that they were witnesses to all he had declared, and which was then being fulfilled.

### JESUS APPEARS TO APOSTLES, INCLUDING THOMAS.

John xx, 24-29.

#### SIXTH APPEARANCE.

All the above appearances were on the resurrection-day. After that Jesus remained, as far as we know, invisible to all friends or foes, till the next Sabbath, or first day of the week, which was April the sixteenth. This appearance was at Jerusalem and to all of his chosen disciples. John only gives us this account, and it was on this wise: The disciples told Thomas on their second assemblage, "We have seen the Lord." But to them he said, "Except I shall see in his hands the print of the nails, and put my finger into the print of the nails, and thrust my hand into his side, I will not believe." Thomas was in earnest about what he said. So Jesus, on the eighth day, came into the apostolic assembly while the doors were shut, and stood up and said, "Peace be unto you." And to Thomas he said, "Reach hither thy finger and behold my hands, and reach hither thy hand and thrust it into my side, and be not faithless, but believing." Thomas replied, "My Lord and my God!" Thomas was thoroughly convinced, and was willing to accept Jesus as his Lord and God. But Jesus reproved him for waiting for demonstrations to draw out his faith. Jesus showed him that this method of faith is detrimental to the soul's best interests. Thomas had had proofs enough that Jesus was risen, and should ask no others of the apostles

## JESUS APPEARS TO SEVEN DISCIPLES.

John xxi, 1-23.

## SEVENTH APPEARANCE.

This seventh appearance of Jesus was at the sea of Galilee. There the disciples went with Peter to fish. This work was the original trade of some of them, and they went at it now, perhaps, for present emergencies. For several weeks they had done nothing, and were not yet finally commissioned to permanent work. They were held, as yet, in suspense. It was in the same month of April, but just how far from the last appearance at Jerusalem to the apostles we can not tell. This is the third time Jesus appears to his specially-chosen disciples in body, though they were not all here; yet we find Peter, Thomas, Nathanael, James, John, and two, for some cause, unnamed. These men fished, it seems, during an entire night in vain, though much in need of fish by lingering a whole night. Early next morning Jesus stood on the shore, plainly seen by them. He asked, "Children, have ye any meat?" They replied, "No." Jesus further said, "Cast the net on the right side of the boat, and ye shall find." They obeyed Jesus, and could not draw the net for its fullness of fishes. At once John said, in a low voice, to Peter, "It is the Lord." Peter at once girded his clothes about him, and plunged into the water, to go to Jesus. They, of course, were in fordable water. After Peter waded out to Jesus, the others came in a boat, dragging the heavy net. When they reached the land, they found fire-coals and fish laid thereon, and bread. Jesus told them to bring to land their fishes; and Peter led in piling up one hundred and fifty-three. Then Jesus invited, "Come and dine." But no one asked who was the mysterious personage, since they all knew him. There again Jesus ate with his disciples—another proof of his resurrection.

We must not pass this juncture without a few observations. First, that Jesus is always present in a time of need to lend a helping hand to his children, as to those toiling disciples. Second, Jesus told them on what side to fish, and they obeyed, and caught abundantly. There is no loss when we obey his voice. Third, Jesus evidently was teaching these men how he could and would prosper them in catching men. And what was taught these seven is taught us all.

We now take up Peter's great trial. It is the triple question of his Lord. It is a greater trial than that of the denial, though he backslid, cursed, and swore much. Peter had denied his Lord three times, and his Lord tested him by his question to the third time.

After the early shore breakfast, when they all sat about Jesus, thinking over the great draught of fishes, Jesus asked Simon Peter the first time, "Simon, son of Jonas, lovest thou me more than these?" Peter replied promptly, as ever before, "Yea, Lord; thou knowest that I love thee." Peter by this time was sure that Jesus was Divine, and possessed omniscience, but especially since his resurrection, which now went without question. And he knew Jesus knew he loved him, and that he had thoroughly repented of his backsliding. And Peter felt that Jesus was going to say no more about loving him. But as time briefly passed, Jesus asked Peter the same question a second time. Peter doubtless thought his Master did not hear his first reply distinctly, or had some other design in asking it; and he only replied as before, "Yea, Lord; thou knowest that I love thee." When Peter first replied, Jesus commanded, "Feed my lambs;" but in this second reply Jesus rejoins, "Feed my sheep;" and says the same to Peter's third reply. Time fled by, and not, as some suggest, that these questions were asked in brief consecution. For if these questions were thus asked, their effectiveness would have been

lost. Peter was allowed pause to think, as he had had pause to deny his Lord thoughtlessly. And when Jesus asked, the third time, the self-same question, only in a more emphatic and suggestive way, Peter was grieved, and he said, "Lord, thou knowest all things. Thou knowest that I love thee." Here Peter calls out his faith of the Divinity of Jesus, and through it suggests to Jesus that he himself could determine whether or not he loved him.

One of the most comforting thoughts in the Christian life is that one can always feel "that God knows me." Peter had great comfort in this; for he felt that his once denied and deserted Savior was never again to trust his lips, since once they faltered.

When Jesus had brought out Peter's professed love to his brethren, he put upon him another great trial. This second trial was one of faith; while the first was one of love. In this trial Peter is reminded of two periods of life; namely, youth and old age. In youth, he dressed and went when and where he wished; but in old age, another would gird him and carry him where he would not go. By this language, Jesus meant to tell Peter, in his old days he would stretch forth his hands, and they would be bound, and his life taken for the sake of his Lord. However, Jesus said to him, "Follow me." This is a command of loyalty, and was given to Peter right on the strength of the prophecy of his death.

Peter, in his human frailty, looked at John in the crowd, and, upon being told what he should suffer, wanted to know would his lot be worse than any other; but especially, worse than John's, who leaned on the breast of Jesus. He asked, "What shall this man do?" Jesus replied: "If I will that he tarry till I come, what is that to thee? Follow thou me." The disciples got an idea that John was not to die; but Jesus never said such.



## JESUS APPEARS TO MANY, AND COMMISSIONS HIS DISCIPLES TO THE WORLD.

Matt. xxviii, 16-20; Mark xvi, 15-18; 1 Cor. xv, 6.

## EIGHTH APPEARANCE.

This appearance was doubtless late in April, if not in early May. It was to the multitude; Paul says, "Above five hundred at once." This appearance was in Galilee, whither Jesus had been tending ever since his resurrection; but just where he appeared in Galilee no one knows. This appearance was perhaps the most interesting of any; for it was to more believers; it was more protracted; and Jesus, meanwhile, said more, most probably, than at any other one time. They were in a mountain, but it is not specified. And when the multitude saw Jesus they worshiped him; but some even here doubted him. Jesus declared that all earthly and heavenly power was given him. And, therefore, he sent them to all nations, to teach them and baptize them in the name of the Trinity. Jesus enjoined it upon the disciples to teach all things he commanded; and, in so doing, his presence was promised to attend them. This presence would always be inspiring and helpful. It would strengthen them in every weakness and trial of the body and soul.

## JESUS APPEARS TO JAMES.

1 Cor. xv, 7.

## NINTH APPEARANCE.

This ninth appearance was to James; and while they were yet in Galilee, and after Jesus had shown himself to the multitude. Jesus, somehow, singled James out, and got him alone and showed him himself. Just why Jesus wished especially to favor James with his presence at this time is not known; but the Lord had some special reason for so appearing to this pillar in the Church.

## JESUS APPEARS TO ALL THE APOSTLES.

Acts i, 1-8; Luke xxiv, 49.

## TENTH APPEARANCE.

This is the last special appearance of Jesus prior to his ascension. It was made to the whole apostolic band, as they sat awaiting the orders of their Lord. Jesus pointed out their work, and declared their need to wait for special power from on high. They, as special teachers of the Christian faith, needed not only power for great and trying labors, but also for boldness, perseverance, and increasing warfare. They were going out to the world and against the world. Every man's hand, to start with, was against them. They were to labor against ignorance and error, which labors are always hard. They were to wait at Jerusalem, and not leave the capital of the nation till final orders were given by the sanction of the Holy Spirit. They were to wait for full enlightenment in duty, and for what to do. They were not to know how to begin their work of restoring Israel till Israel's God should, through the Spirit, declare it. They were to restore Israel, yet not in the sense they thought, but in a spiritual manner. In this sense they were to begin the world's restoration.

## JESUS ASCENDS TO HEAVEN.

Acts i, 9-12; Mark xvi, 19; Luke xxiv, 50-53.

Jesus finished the work which he came to do, made his last appearance to the apostolic band at Jerusalem, where he started three years prior; he commissioned them, assured his presence and protection, and finally led them out to Bethany, and was taken up visibly before their eyes. This was the crowning event in the life of Jesus. He had often repeated that he descended from God, and, after his work, would return; but how he would return remained a mystery till this very hour. But when the full time came,

Jesus showed how he would return. Luke declares, only, that Jesus led out his disciples to Bethany, about a Sabbath-day's journey from Jerusalem. And in an attitude of blessing them, he was separated from them, and carried up into heaven. The writer of Acts tells us that Jesus was carried up upon a cloud, which received him out of sight. The disciples, seeing their Leader going up, worshiped him, and returned to Jerusalem with great joy, and remained in the temple, praising God joyfully.

As Jesus was going up, two men stood by the apostles, in white apparel, and said: "Ye men of Galilee, why stand ye gazing up into heaven? This same Jesus, which is taken up from you into heaven, shall so come in like manner as ye see him go into heaven." These two were angels in manly form, who uttered some knowledge of the second coming and its manner, upon the clouds.

But Mark was not satisfied to note the ascension only, but declares that, Jesus returning, took the chief seat on God's right hand, where he always appears in intercession for his people.

We began three years ago to walk with the great personage and character, Jesus the Christ. We now reach the place where he leaves us and disappears into the heavens, where he goes as our Intercessor. We bid him adieu, and hope, at his return, to rejoin his company. We have abundantly enjoyed his association, and a thousand times have been charmed by the sweetness of his disposition, overcome by his love, inwrapped by the purity of his life, and dumb-stricken by his words. Truly, "Never man spake like this man." This life is so sublime, so innocent, so suggestive, and so kind, that none can take steps by his side without being overcome by his suasion, and led to higher planes of good and nobler living.





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